



ANNA
 Angliæ Scotiæ
 Hiberniæ
 Fidei



D. Gratia
 Franciæ et
 Regina,
 Defensor &c.



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 Angliæ Scotiæ
 Hiberniæ
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D. Gratia
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AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE ²
PROGRESS
OF THE

Reformation of Manners,

In *England, Scotland, and Ireland* and
other Parts of *Europe and America.*
With *Reasons and Directions* for our
Engaging in this Glorious Work.

In a Letter to a Friend.

To which is added,
Her Majesty's PROCLAMATION
for the Encouragement of *Piety and Virtue,*
and for [the Preventing and Punishing of *Vice,*
Prophaneness, and Immorality.

The Fourteenth Edition with Additions.

L O N D O N,

Printed and Sold by J. Downing in Bartholomew Close
near West-Smithfield, 1706.

ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS



in England, Scotland, and Ireland and
other Parts of Europe and Asia
With Maps and Illustrations for our
Engraving in this famous Work

H. MONTAGU, Esq. of the
for the purpose of collecting
and for the purpose of illustrating
the progress of the
the progress of the
the progress of the

LONDON
Printed and Sold by J. Taylor, in Strand
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By the QUEEN,
A PROCLAMATION,

For the Encouragement of
PIETY and VIRTUE,

And for the Preventing and Punishing of
Vice. Prophaneness, & Immorality.

A N N E . R.



HEREAS on our
Accession to the Throne,
We thought fit, by the
Advice of our Privy
Council, to Issue out
Our Royal Proclamati-
on, for the Encourage-
ment of *Piety and Vir-
tue*, and for the preven-
ting and punishing of
Vice, Prophaneness, and Immorality: And whereas
We have been informed, That Our Laws menti-
oned in the said *Proclamation* have not been ex-

By the *QUEEN*,

ecuted according to Our just Expectation and Command; We most seriously and religiously considering, That it is an indispensable Duty on Us, to be careful, above all other things, to preserve and advance the Honour and Service of Almighty God, and to discourage and suppress all *Vice, Prophaneness, Debauchery, and Immorality*, which are so highly displeasing to God, so great a Reproach to Our Religion and Government, and (by means of the frequent ill Examples of the Practisers thereof) have so fatal a Tendency to the Corruption of many of Our loving Subjects, otherwise Religiously and Virtuously disposed, and which (if not timely remedied) may justly draw down the Divine Vengeance on Us and Our Kingdoms: We also humbly acknowledging, That We cannot expect the Blessing and Goodness of Almighty God (by whom Kings and Queens Reign, and on which We entirely rely) to make our Reign happy and prosperous to Our Self and Our People, nor hope for the Divine Assistance to deliver Us from the great and imminent Dangers which our Kingdoms, and the true Protestant Religion, Established among Us, are in this present Juncture threatned with, without a Religious Observance of God's Holy Laws: To the Intent therefore that Religion, Piety, and good Manners may (according to Our most hearty Desire) flourish and increafe under Our Administration and Government, We have thought fit (by the Advice of Our Privy Council) to Issue this our Royal Proclamation, and do hereby declare Our Royal Purpose and Resolution to discountenance and punish all Manner of *Vice, Prophaneness, and Immorality*, in all Persons of whatsoever Degree or Quality,

A Proclamation.

Quality, within this Our Realm, and paticularly in such as are employed near Our Royal Person; and that for the greater Encouragement of Religion and Morality, We will, upon all Occasions, distinguish Persons of Piety and Virtue, by Marks of Our Royal Favour. And We do expect and require, that all Persons of Honour, or in Place of Authority, will give good Example by their own Virtue and Piety, and to their utmost, contribute to the discountenancing Persons of dissolute and debauched Lives, that they being by that Means reduced to Shame and Contempt, for their loose and evil Actions and Behaviour, may be thereby also enforced the sooner to reform their ill Habits and Practices, and that the visible Displeasure of good Men towards them, may (as far as it is possible) supply what the Laws (probably) cannot altogether prevent. And we do hereby strictly enjoin and prohibit all our loving Subjects, of what Degree or Quality soever, from Playing on the *Lord's-Day* at *Dice*, *Cards*, or any other Game whatsoever, either in Publick or Private Houses, or other Placeor Places whatsoever; and do hereby require and command them, and every of them, decently and reverently to attend the Worship of God on every *Lord's-Day*, on Pain of Our highest Displeasure, and of being proceeded against with the utmost Rigour that may be by Law. And for the more effectual Reforming of all such Persons, who, by Reason of their dissolute Lives and Conversations, are a Scandal to Our Kingdom, Our further Pleasure is, and We do hereby strictly Charge and Command all Our Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and all other Our Officers and Ministers, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, and all other

By the *QUEEN*,

other Our Subjects whom it may concern, to be very vigilant and strict in the Discovery, and the effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons who shall be guilty of excessive *Drinking, Blasphemy, Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Lewdness, Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, or other dissolute, Immoral, or Disorderly Practices; and that they take care also effectually to suppress all Bawdy-Houses, Publick Gaming Houses and Places, and other disorderly Houses, and to put in Execution the Statute made in the Nine and Twentieth Year of the Reign of Our late Royal Uncle King *Charles the Second*, Intituled, *An Act for the better Observation of the Lord's-Day, commonly called Sunday*; and also an Act of Parliament made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Our late dear Brother King *William the Third*, Intituled, *An Act for the more effectual Suppressing of Blasphemy and Prophaneness*; and all other Laws now in Force for the Punishing and Suppressing any of the Vices aforesaid; and also to suppress and prevent all Gaming whatsoever in Publick or Private Houses on the Lord's-Day; and likewise that they take effectual Care to prevent all Persons keeping Taverns, Chocolate-Houses, Coffee-Houses, or other Publick Houses whatsoever, from selling Wine, Chocolate, Coffee, Ale, Beer, or other Liquors, or receiving or permitting Guests to be or remain in such their Houses on the Lord's-Day, (except in Case of Necessity and Charity) as they will answer it to Almighty God, and upon pain of Our highest Displeasure. And for the more effectual proceeding herein, We do hereby direct and command all Our Judges of Assize, and Justices of the Peace, to give strict Charges at their respective Assizes

and

A Proclamation.

and Sessions, for the due Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons that shall presume to offend in any the kinds aforesaid, and also of all Persons that, contrary to their Duty, shall be remiss or negligent in putting the said Laws in Execution; and that they do at their respective Assizes and Quarter Sessions of the Peace, cause this Our Proclamation to be publickly read in open Court, immediately before the Charge is given. And We do hereby further Charge and command every Minister in his respective Parish-Church or Chappel, to read, or cause to be read, this Our Proclamation at least *Four* times in every Year, immediately after Divine Service, and to incite and stir up their respective Auditories to the Practice of Piety and Virtue, and avoiding of all Immorality and Prophaneness: And to the End that all Vice and Debauchery may be prevented, and Religion and Virtue practised by all Officers, private Soldiers, Mariners, and others, who are employed in Our Service, by Sea or Land, We do hereby strictly charge and command all Our Commanders and Officers whatsoever, that they do take Care to avoid all Prophaneness, Debauchery, and other Immoralities; and that by their own good and virtuous Lives and Conversations they do set good Examples to all such as are under their Care and Authority, and likewise take Care of and inspect the Behaviour of all such as are under them, and to punish all those who shall be guilty of any the Offences aforesaid, as they will be answerable for the ill Consequences of their Neglect herein.

Given at our Court at St James's the 25th Day of February, 1702. In the First Year of Our Reign.

G O D save the Q U E E N.

The

AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
PROGRESS
OF THE
Reformation of Manners, &c.

S I R,

I Suppose that you have heard of the Attempts that have been made by the Societies for Reformation of Manners, for the Promoting the Execution of the Penal Laws against Prophaneness and Debauchery, begun by some few Persons of the Church of England, and most of them private Men, who resolved to make their Efforts, and agreed to meet frequently together to concert proper Measures for the putting a stop to the Inundation of Vice and Prophaneness that had broke in upon us, and threatned our Ruine: That the Endeavours of these Societies, which are now become so numerous, are spreading in other far distant Nations, and were thus happily begun, have had a very great Success, by God's Blessing, for the Suppressing of Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Blasphemy, Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, Drunkenness, and the Uncleaness that was committed in the infamous Houses in and about

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London,

London, and other Parts of the Kingdom, and the giving a great Check to the Open Lewdness that was transacted, to our high Reproach, in many of the Streets of this great City ; Besides the great good that hath been done by them since they have enlarged their Designs in promoting the sincere Practice of Religion, by their procuring so many Books and Papers to be writ for the awakening of Men to a sense of their Sins and Concern for their Souls ; the exciting of them to a conscientious Discharge of Family Duty ; and the laying open to the Word the outrageous Disorders and execrable Impieties of our most Scandalous Play-Houses, with the fatal Effects of them to the Nation in general, and the manifest Sin and Danger of particular Persons frequenting of them ; and in giving away, at their own Expence, a great Number of these Books and Papers that they procured to be published on such proper Subjects for the effecting a Reformation ; and lastly, the promoting of the Education of poor Children in the Principles of Religion, and the employing of them (with their Learning) in some such Work as may render them more serviceable to the Publick. That these Attempts for Suppressing of Vice and Prophaneness by the Execution of the Laws have been publickly and solemnly Approved by a considerable Number of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Honourable Judges of the Kingdoms of England and Ireland ; and have been recommended occasionally, and in another manner, by most of the other of our Right Reverend Bishops, in their Circular Letters, printed 1699. (of which I shall take some farther Notice) . But you may not be acquainted,

ed, That his late Majesty having this Affair laid before him by one of his chief Ministers of State, promised the Societies not only his Protection, but Countenance : And that our present Illustrious QUEEN, since the issuing out of her *Proclamations* against *Vice* and *Prophaneness*, hath been graciously pleased to signify Her Approbation of this Work : That these Endeavours are carrying on in most Parts of this Kingdom, and in many of those of *Ireland*, as I could enumerate to you if 'twere necessary : and have been applauded and recommended, in a publick manner, as fit to be imitated by other Christian States, by the Commissioners of several *French* Churches, who were appointed to take this Affair into their Consideration; and have been lately very solemnly Approved by divers of the Nobility, and by the Commissioners of the General Assembly of the Church of *Scotland*, where this Work is now so far advanced, that besides the *Societies* for *Reformation* lately set up in other Parts of that Kingdom, there were (we are informed) some Months since, Thirteen of these Societies in the City of *Edinburgh* alone ; in which City, the Magistrates have, upon this occasion, lately erected a new Court against *Immorality* ; and that 'tis to be hop'd that, with God's Blessing, a great part of the Christian World will be influenced hereby, the Account of these *Societies* being already Translated into the *French* and *High-Dutch* Languages, and hath been some time since Translating into the *Latin*, for the Propagating the same Glorious Design in other Nations ; by which means a great part of the World will be soon acquainted with this Undertaking, and the Success of it, and it may

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reasonably

reasonably be expected, will be excited to an Imitation: And this may the rather be hop'd, since the restraining of Men from publick Vices, and open Violations of Religion, hath, I think, ever been thought the great Interest and Business of Government, is what the Laws of civilized Nations, tho' they may be more or less severe in different Countries, provide against, Ancient and Modern, Heathen and Christian Legislators, Papists and Protestants, Jews and Mahometans agree in; and since moreover so many learned and pious Persons, in divers parts of *Europe* and *America*, are already successfully engaged in Promoting of this Work by Societies, after the Example of *England*.

A Reverend Divine, who hath been lately in our Northern Plantations in *America*, by the Encouragement of divers of our Bishops, for the Propagating Christianity there, ordered a whole Impression of the *Account of the Societies* to be printed off, and sent thither, for the promoting a Reformation, by these Methods, in those Parts of the World. And this Reverend Person the last Month told me, that he thinks they have since made a more remarkable Reformation there, than is in either of Her Majesty's Kingdoms.

From the Island of *Jamaica*, Dr. *Tod*, Rector of *St. Thomas in the Vale*, tells us, that at a general Meeting of the Clergy of that Island at *St. Jago de la Vaga* Novemb. 27. 1700. by the appointment of their Commissary, the Clergy, in conjunction with divers of the Gentlemen of that Country, had formed themselves into a Society for Reformation of Manners, and

the Propagation of Christian Knowledge; and that the Governour of that Island had under his Hand Signed his full Approbation of it, and their Orders.

'Tis affirmed by a Person of Integrity, who is come over from Flanders, that they have very much suppressed the disorderly Houses in Brussels, (the Popish Priests in that City having gone about to the Publick Houses, exhorting them to leave off their Irregularities) as he assures me they had done the Musick-Houses, which were generally Houses of ill Fame, in Amsterdam in Holland; from whence Monsieur Bonage has wrote to a Person in Ireland, to be informed what Progress Religion hath made in that Kingdom since Societies have been set up in it, being, it seems, desirous, as this Gentleman informs me, to engage himself in this Work in Holland.

By a Letter from Switzerland, dated in Octob. 1700. we were acquainted, That an Account of our Societies was translated into the High-Dutch Language; and that they were making some Progress in this Undertaking.

From Schafhausen't was wrote, Jan. 12. 1700. That they rejoiced to hear of our Zeal in England, from an Account of our Societies, which was there translated; and that they had Examples of the same sort of Societies.

From Germany we have the following Account from Dr. Franck, Divinity Professor in the City of Hall in Saxony, Jan. 21. 1700. who writes thus to some Persons in this Place: The

eminent Success of your Undertakings hath been made known in Germany by the Reverend Dr. Jablonski, Chaplain to the newly Crowned King of Prussia, who hath translated the Account of the Societies out of English into the German Language. Nor hath this Gentleman's Labours in it proved unsuccessful: For besides the good it hath done to the Souls of many particular Persons, who have been awakened thereby to a greater Concern for their Spiritual Edification, it hath had a particular good Effect at Noremburgh, in that it hath mightily put forward and encouraged a Society, consisting of a great Number of Citizens, who had some time before began to meet at each others Houses upon a religious Account, and from a sincere desire of the Truth; as a very worthy Person hath, by the Request of them all, acquainted me, &c.

From Rotterdam the famous Monsieur Jurieu hearing of these Societies, takes Notice in a transporting manner, in a Letter to a Divine in London, That amidst the many Societies that were in the World about the Concerns of Gold and Silver, and for bringing the Wealth of the Indies into other Countries, he had at last heard a most reviving Account of pious Persons united in very successful Methods for the Extirpation of Vice and Prophaneness, and the bringing down of the Riches of Heaven; for which he praises God, and conceives great Hopes from hence, that those happy Days may ensue to the Christian World which Holy Souls so ardently desire and long for.

Monsieur Ostervald (the learned Author of that excellent Book, intituled, *A Treatise concerning the Causes of the present Corruption of*
Chri-

Christians, and the Remedies thereof, tells us in a Letter dated *April the 6th 1701*. from the Principality of *Neuf-Castle*, That he had printed off there an *Account of our Societies*; and that since that was done, the *Pious Designs* formed in *England* were there approved, &c. And *April the 11th 1701*, he again says, That their Consistory being last Week assembled, resolved to buy up some hundreds of the printed Copies of the *Account of the Societies*; and that they were sent to all the Consistories of that State, in order to dispose them to a *Reformation of Manners*, and to the setting up of Schools; and that the Magistrates of *Neuf-Castle* were addressed to by them for Orders and Laws against *Vice* and *Immorality*, which they had already obtained.

A Gentleman at *St. Galle*, in his Letter bearing date the *19th of May 1701*. writes to his Friend in *England*, That the setting up of *Societies* was recommended to a large Synod of Divines, at their late Meeting at *Zurich*, as the best Expedient for the engaging Men to a Religious course of Life: That the *Account of our Religious Societies*, which was translated and printed at *Zurich*, was much enquired after: That Orders had been given from other *Protestant Cantons*, for the buying up some Numbers of them: That Monsieur Scherer had put into the *German Language* the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, which was there in the Press, and he hoped would be printed off in a few Days; that 'twas intended to be dedicated to the States; and that Care was taken to make it known all over *Germany*, In which Country the Pious Dr.

Cramner, this Gentleman says, expresses a great Zeal to set forward this Work in his University.

Monsieur de Moos writes from *Malans*, in the Country of the *Grisons*, Sept. 22. 1701. That an Assembly of Divines that met at *Fais* in that Country the second of that Month, a very advantageous Account of our Designs of Reformation had been given them; that they would be laid before their Synod when they met; and that they designed to appoint a Person of Learning and Piety to begin and continue a Correspondence with one of our Societies in England.

An Envoy Extraordinary from one of the greatest Princes of Europe, to the *Swiss Cantons*, writes in these Terms to an *English Gentleman*, in a Letter dated at *BERN*, Septemb. 10. 1701. I have discours'd with the Principal Persons of this Church and State, and all of them bless God for the Success wherewith he has Crowned the Zeal of your Holy and Religious Society, and are all of them enclined to enter into a Correspondence, &c.

A Person of great Reputation in Switzerland acquaints us, Sept. 18. 1701. That *Monsieur Anfillon*, who hath a Commission to the Protestant Cantons from the King of Denmark, has by Letters to his Correspondents recommended this Work at *Berlin*; and that a Proposal was there made for Translating the Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners into the Danish and Swedish Languages; and that a Design was there laid of setting up and carrying on of Societies in Denmark and Sweden, by means of these Translations. He goes on thus

thus in the same Letter : *The Societies in England are in such Esteem in those Parts, that on the sixth of November, 1701. (their general appointed Fast Day) they publickly prayed for the Preservation of them in all the Protestant Churches in that Country. I hope there is no Englishman that hath the least Sparks of Love to his Native Country, but will have in Honour these incomparable Societies : If there are any People so impudent, as to speak disrespectfully of them, let them look to it, that it doth not one time or other fare with them, as now goes with----* (an Adversary of the Societies, he means) *at Zurich, who, I am told, is so ashamed of his having opposed us, since all honest Men are on our side, that he is resolved to leave his Native Country, and go with his Family into some Foreign Parts. These unparallel'd Societies in England are not only to be regarded for the Honour they bring to their most happy Nation, but far more for the unspeakable Good that they cause to the Church of Christ both at home and abroad, and annunciate a more illustrious state of the Church of God that is expected by the Conversion of Jews and Gentiles. These are his Words, and he adds further these following : Thus, dear Sir, we now find all the Helvetick and Rhetick Churches are entirely disposed to propagate Christian Knowledge, punish Vice, and promote true Piety, as the Honourable Society invite them to.*

Monsieur Brink, Chaplain to the King of Denmark, wrote March 2. 1701. to a Reverend Divine in this Kingdom, to send him the Books relating to Reformation here, in order to his setting forward the same Design in that Kingdom ; which was accordingly done ; whose Endeavours therein, we have reason given us to hope, are by this time advantageously

rageously assisted by several publick Ministers at that Court: And we understand, that there hath been some Months past transmitted into Sweden, and several other Countries, the Books of *Reformation*, for the promoting of the Design of them likewise in those Countries.

From *Cleft* in the Country of the *Grizons*, the celebrated Lady *Madam Hortensia de Salis*, whom you find honourably mentioned in the Bishop of *Salisbury's* printed Letters of *Switzerland*, in her Letter dated the tenth of *March 1702.* thus writes: *I cannot sufficiently declare how great a Veneration is had for the Church of England, the King, and the illustrious Society, in this Country, by all, in particular by the Clergy. They are every where prayed for, and remembred, as in our Hearts, so in all our Pulpits also. I trust in God (says she) that as He had always his Moses's, Lots, and Samuels, that withheld his Wrath, &c. So he will now, in our Days, raise up many sincere Christians, who by the Example of the Church of England, and of the Illustrious Society, will be encouraged to promote the Good, and punish the Bad, according to the Laws and Customs of every Country.*

From *New-England* we are told, That great Care hath been theretaken of late for the Punishment of *Vice* and *Prophaneness* by the Methods that are here us'd; and a Gentleman in that Country, in his Letter bearing date *April 10. 1702.* informs us, That several Societies are formed in *Boston*, and he thinks that in a little time he shall acquaint us of others set up in other Parts of that Country.

Mr. *Peter Zeller*, a very eminent Minister in *Zurich* in *Switzerland*, in a Letter of his dated

red Feb. 6. 1703. does in very affectionate Terms express their common Esteem of the pious Societies here, and their Expectations of great Advantages to *England*, and to the Church of Christ from them. And having mentioned the frequent Earthquakes in and about *Rome*, which he thinks may be Tokens of God's Displeasure to those Places: He adds his Opinion, that he thinks God is pleased to vouchsafe to our Nation the happy Presages of Prosperous times, in the Rise and Success of those Societies, by whose means Religion and Virtue is very much advanced both in our own and other Nations.

Monsieur Scherer, in a Letter of his from *Sangall* of Jan. 26. 1703. assures us of the reviving of Piety among them, by the Report of what is done here by our Societies, which are concerned in Religious Affairs.

A Gentleman of great Character at *Berlin*, in a Letter dated Feb. 23. 1704. acquaints us, That there were printed in that City Two Thousand of our Little Discourses sent from *England*, and among them the *Soldiers Monitor**. That the *Soldier's Monitor* was (to use the Gentleman's own Words) distributed among the Soldiers in their Garrison by the General's Order; that the King of *Prussia* being presented with it by one of his Bishops, and having read and approved it, (as did likewise his Privy Council,) has already given, or will soon give Orders to have a considerable Number of them printed for the Benefit of his Soldiers; that some of them were given to the Prince of *Gotha*, who went from hence the other Day to the King of *Sweden*,
The Soldiers Monitor, written by Dr. Woodward, (Author of the Account of the Rise and Progress of the Religious Societies) many Thousands of which have been bought up and given away by the Society for Reformation.

* The Kind
Caution to
Prophane
Swearers,
dispersed
by the So-
ciety for
Reformati-
on in Eng-
land in vast
Numbers.

† This little
Book is or-
dered by
Her Majesty
to be distri-
buted a-
mong Her
Soldiers in
Flanders, in
Ireland, and
in Portugal.

den, to whom he promised to give an Example ; and at the same time he was well assured, that his Majesty would be so well pleased with it, that he would give Orders to have his Army supplied with the same, and more especially, since there was bound with it, the Discourse against Swearing*, for which Vice in particular his Swedish Majesty has a great Aversion. The Soldier's Monitor†, to which is added, the Discourse against Swearing, he says, is likewise translated into the Muscovite Language, as designed to be recommended to the Emperor, to his Czarish Majesty, and likewise to the Queen of Poland (to whom he gives the Epithets of Pious and Virtuous) who would be apply'd to, to disperse it throughout the Saxon Army, &c.

A Gentleman in New-England, in a Letter dated Octob. 8. 1704, writes to his Correspondent in London in the following Words : The Societies lately erected for the Service of Religion in London, and in some other Parts of Europe, have by their laudable Example had an Influence upon a Country as far distant from them as New-England in Ireland, and America. And we thought it might be some Satisfaction to you and other good Men with you, to have a summary Account of the Good which is daily doing among us in Imitation of the Example that you have given us. We shall accordingly inform you, that a Number of Gentlemen who make the best Figure in this Place, did a few Months ago establish a voluntary Conversation once in a Fortnight. The Gentlemen of the Society for Propagation of Religion have already had a sensible Blessing of God upon their Consultations and Undertakings. They have sent into every Town of the Province

Province Treatises to animate the Observation of the Lord's-Day. They have conveyed unto such People among our selves as frequently and profanely absent themselves from the Publick Worship of God, a Sheet of Considerations to reclaim them from that Prophanity. They compiled and emitted an Abstract of Laws against all punishable Wick- edness; and armed the Officers in the several Parts of the Province therewithal. They are now endeavouring to introduce more Religion into our Sea-faring Tribe, and season our Vessels with better Orders than have been generally practised. These are but some of the good things which they have done in a very little while; We shall supersede the mention of the rest, with one very comprehensive Service: They produced in Boston, our chief Town, a Society for the Suppression of Disorders; many good Offices have been done for the Town in a little while by that Society; they printed a Sheet of Methods and Motives for such Societies; the Sheet they scattered throughout these Colonies. In many Towns they have erected such Societies, and conformed unto the Advice that have been set before them. In these Towns the Ministers find the Societies, with which they have accommodated themselves, to be admirable Engines for the maintaining and promoting of all good Order among their People. We receive Letters from divers Quarters, wherein they do even with some Rapture give Thanks to God for the Advantage they have already received by these Societies. They generally carry on their Design with Prudence and Silence, and great Modesty, but with wondrous Efficacy. We confess we owe unto you the Relation, because we are beholding to you for the Example that hath been followed in our feeble Essays to do what we
can

can for the advancement of the Greatest Interest. May the God of all Grace prosper all your and our Effays thus to do what Good we can, &c.

Monsieur Fablonski, Chaplain to the King of Prussia, in a Letter from thence dated Decemb. 15. 1704. writes thus: *A Second Edition of the Soldiers Monitor has been made by the Command of the King of Prussia, at his own Expence, to be distributed throughout his whole Army; since the first Impression, which-----favoured us withal, did but little more than furnish the King's Guards. And indeed that little Book is so much esteemed by his Majesty, that when the excellent Baron Fuxius first shew'd it in the Prince's Council, the King himself took a Copy of it out of his Pocket with great Joy, and declared that he had weigh'd it with great Consideration. And Bishop Urfinus lately told me, that he had seen it in the King's Pocket a few Months since.*

Dr. Lekerder, Divinity-Professor of the University of Utrecht, in a Letter to an English Gentleman dated October 1705. writes that he had seen there *An Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England*, had read it with great Satisfaction, and prays God to bless with Success the Endeavours of those that are concerned in the Suppressing of Vice and Prophaneness.

Monsieur Clermont, a Divine of Amsterdam, writes to a Gentleman of England in September 1705, that having communicated the Designs of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England to his Friends, all of them concurred in approving of them, and gives his Opinion, that nothing would contribute more to the promoting of such Societies, than a more general Dis-
tribu-

distribution of the Books that treat of those Designs.

A Reverend Divine of New England in his Letter dated from Boston the 23d of November 1705, says thus: Sir, It was but Yesterday that your Letters to our worthy Friend Mr. arrived: However, we were not willing to miss this Opportunity of returning you our hearty Thanks for your grateful Communications, and of letting you know that we take every Opportunity of returning greatest Thanks to the God of Heaven, for disposing and assisting so many (as we perceive by your Letters) unto such noble Methods of being Serviceable.

And because you may expect something of that also, we will go on where we left off in the Account we formerly gave you of our Proceedings on those best Intentions; the Reformation of Manners, and the Propagation of Christian Knowledge and Goodness.

Our Societies for the suppression of Disorders, increase and prosper in this Town; there are two more such Societies added unto the former; There are also Religious Societies without Number in this Country that meet at proper Times, to Pray together and repeat Sermons, and forward one another in the Fear of God.

In some Towns of this Country, the Ministers, who furnish themselves with a Society for the suppression of Disorders, hardly find any notorious Disorders to be suppressed: but then their Societies are helpful unto them in doing abundance of Good for the Advancement of serious Religion in the Neighbourhood, and to make their Ministry much more Profitable in the Weekly Exercise of it.

A Learned Gentleman of Rotterdam writes in these Terms concerning the Suppressing of Prophaneness and Vice by the Endeavours of our Societies in England: Whatever Men, says he, may think of their being acceptable to God, in earnestly contending for their little Opinions and Differences with each other; (he speaks of Persons in that Country) It was a great doubt whether God will approve of and bless it. But that this was certainly the Work and Will of God to have Vice and Prophaneness rooted out and kept down, and consequently that all that have a Hand in it, may on good Ground expect the Blessing of God in it.

A Gentleman writes from New-England, in his Letter of the 20th of November 1705. *To gratifie your Desires to know what Progress we make here in our Societies, I make bold to add a Line or two to certify, That in Boston the Societies for suppressing Disorders (of which mention was made in my former Letters) are upheld, and two other Societies of the same Nature erected. All which are spirited to be active, according to their Abilities and Influence, to promote Virtue and discountenance and suppress Vice. And not only in Boston are such good Things done, and doing, but in many Places in the Province besides. Omitting many other things that might be enumerated as to other Places, I shall sum up, in short, an Account of what hath been done in a Town called Taunton through the rich Mercy of God: The Reverend Mr. ——— Minister there, having seen some Printed Accounts of the Methods for Reformation in Old England, in imitation thereof (after earnest Prayers to God for Success) obtained of several Inhabitants of the Place (that were*

were noted for Sobriety and Zeal against Sin) to meet with him once in each Month, to consult what might be done to promote a Reformation of Disorders there. And after a Day improved in Fasting and Prayer together; they first attempted to reduce the Heads of Families to set up Family Worship; and God gave them great Success; So that most of the Families in the large Towns hearkened to their Exhortations and Reproofs; and set upon the Practice of Family Prayer Morning and Evening; every Day having heard and read some Accounts of the Religious Societies of young Men in London, they were encouraged to endeavour the like among them. And beyond their Expectation (God working with them) prevailed with the greatest part of the Youth to form themselves into Societies for Religious Exercises, signing some good Rules to be observed by them therein; much like the Orders of the Societies of young Men in London. The good Effect whereof was the putting an End to and utter Banishment of their former disorderly and profane Meetings to Drink, &c. and to the great Grief of Godly Minds.

There is also something done in the Town (and in some others) towards the founding of a School, by getting Lands granted and laid out by the Inhabitants for that particular Design of upholding a School. And whereas some Prints from Old-England certifie us, That the Inferior Clergy are advised to meet together often, and consult how to promote Reformation: In like manner some Essays are made, that Neighbouring Ministers in this Province might uphold some stated Meetings, to consider of what they may do for the same End.

Now, Sir, our Imitation of the pious Zeal of godly Men in Old England, is a sufficient Testimony

of our Approbation of what is doing there. And blessed be God that there is a great Number in this Province, who Daily pray to God for the Prosperity of Old England : And especially that Religion in the Power and Life of it may Flourish there.

Lastly, The Reverend Dr. Mark, Dr. Wits, and Dr. Van Til, Divinity-Professors of the University of Leyden, in the Month of December 1705, sent to a Gentleman in England their formal Approbation of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England, concerning whom they among other Things thus say: That they are highly pleased to hear that in England Men of Quality, as well as those of an Inferiour Rank, joyn in Societies for the putting the Laws against Prophaneness and Immorality in Execution; and that the Endeavours of those pious Persons can never be enough praised, especially in this most corrupt Age. And they earnestly beseech God to inspire other Princes and Persons in high Stations with Zeal for his Glory, that they may oblige those whose particular Province it is to put the Laws against Impiety in Execution, to be more Vigilant in their Duty, may protect such as are Diligent therein, against such as oppose them, and give their Countenance, &c. to such as apply themselves to the Extermination of Vice; and that they for their Part shall never cease to excite Men, as much as they can, to such a Zeal.

I could have mentioned another Kingdom wherein our Endeavours of Reformation of Manners seem to have had a very great Influence. But this I forbear upon some Considerations at present; and the rather, since the particulars I have given you are, I conceive, not only sufficient

cient to convince you fully, that the Success of our Methods of *Reformation* here, have given Occasion to Persons of the Nations beforementioned, to whom an Account of our Proceedings herein have reached, to set about the same Work; and that it will influence more of those Nations that are remote when it is known to them, by the Translation of the *Account of the Societies* into the more general Languages (that are already perfected, or are, we hear, carrying on) but may moreover give you occasion to think, that the Providence of Almighty God hath, in a particular Manner, favoured this Design, especially when you consider, how, and by what means it was begun, and hath been carried on; and that by his Blessing it will prevail over the Opposition made to it from either its publick or private Enemies.

And now, *Sir*, give me leave to say, Can it become any that would be reckoned Christians, that have this great Affair laid before them, to be unconcerned whether those Attempts which have been so successful for the beating down of *Prophaneness* and *Vice*, which have so spread in the World, be carried on not only in these Three Kingdoms, and in our Neighbouring Nations, but through the Christian World; whether the Cause of Religion or the Devil's Interest prevails, to stand Neuter at a Time when their Fellow Christians are successfully engaged in the Defence of our Religion against its Enemies, in their bold Attacques upon it; and frequently with the Hazard of their Lives; as lately at *May-Fair*; where some brave Souls were wounded, and one Constable* was barbarously murder'd in the Sight of the Sun and almost in the

* One Mr. Cooper, a religious Man, and since called a Confessor for his Religion by several of our Divines. See his Funeral Sermon,

† One *Thomas Cook*, a common Fencer, hath been since executed, and *William Wallis*, a Serjeant of the Guards, condemned for being concerned in this *Murder*.

Face of the Court, by a Company of Soldiers ‡, who, to the Number of above *Thirty*, as is deposed upon Oath, fell upon the Civil Officers, and their Assistants, with their Swords in their Hands, and Oaths and Execrations in their Mouths, without any Provocation, whilst the Constables, with those that assisted them, were endeavouring to prevent the abominable Disorders that were there committed, in Obedience to the Commands of Her Majesty, and by immediate Direction from the Justices of the Peace of that County.

But, *Sir*, to speak with a little more freedom to you, Can you think it either justifiable or honourable for one under your Character to satisfy your self with talking gravely and judiciously against the Impieties of the Age; with speaking kindly of those that are concerned in the Suppressing of them; or even with acting so faintly in this matter, as to discourage any that may be concerned with you in it from the Prosecution of it; and to speak plainly, to contribute, by your Neutrality or Lukewarmness, to the giving of Boldness and Strength to the Opposers of this Undertaking, and in consequence, I doubt, to the shedding of the Blood, and to the utter Ruine of some of the best Subjects to the Government, if not some of the best Christians in the Nation, who, I am told, are so far from being discouraged (the heartiest of them I mean) by the Oppositions and Sufferings they have met with from the Enemies of *Reformation*, (who have a fresh Occasion given them to consider of whom the Blood that is already shed, and that which may be spilt in the Work of *Reformation*, may be required)

quired) that they seem to be animated thereby with greater Zeal for their God, as the Martyrs of old were by the Death of their Fellow-Christians. No; this is, I conceive, a time for all that carry the Face of Christians, to exert their Interest and Authority, to join their Heads, Hearts, Hands, and Purses in this Noble Undertaking.

This therefore is what I most earnestly recommend to you, that you would be of the happy Number of those that give their hearty and zealous Assistance in this pious Enterprize, wherein the Honour of Almighty God and the Good of the World seem to be so much concerned, and thereby become a Benefactor to Mankind. And that you may not be discouraged from Engaging in it for want of Direction how to promote it, I have herewith sent you such Materials as may enable you to set about it with great Advantage after you have humbly supplicated the Divine Direction and Aid in so weighty an Affair; and which will, I conceive, leave you with less Excuse, if you do not in some measure what you shall conclude, upon your most solemn Deliberation upon this Proposal, it behoves you to do therein.

You have, Sir, first of all, in the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England and Ireland*, which I have sent you, a Narrative of the *Beginning and Success* of the *Endeavours of Reformation*, and a general Scheme of the *Undertaking*, with a Perswasive to Men of all *Ranks and Denominations*; and a particular Address to *Ministers and Magistrates*, who have their special Obligations laid before them to be zealous in it: To which are added, His

Majesty's *Proclamation* against *Prophaneness* and *Vice*, and the *Act of Parliament* against *prophane Swearing* and *Cursing*, which Ministers are to read Four times a Year in their Churches and Chappels; and an *Abstract of the Laws* which Magistrates are to Execute for the Suppressing of *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, &c. And in a little Book, called, *A Help to Reformation*, besides the *Proclamation*, *Act of Parliament* and *Abstract* beforementioned, (which are Printed for the Use of Magistrates and Ministers) Magistrates have *Forms of Warrants* and of a *Register* in those Cases; Inferior Officers have Instructions laid before them for their Executing of their Office with the greatest Advantage; and private Persons have *Prudential Rules* for the giving of *Informations* and the raising of *Societies*; which *Societies*, I must observe to you, have been, from the Beginning of this Undertaking, and will still be, the great Engines for the carrying of it on: And that therefore the most considerable Service that can generally be done in it will be, in the *Forming of Societies*, wherein the greatest care in making choice of Men of strict Lives and unblemish'd Reputation is necessary: Insomuch, that this Work will seldom fail to go on too slowly, and not without some Obstruction, in that place where there is not a Society of this kind, especially if there is wanting a good Magistrate; but much more easily, steadily and successfully, in any Town or Village where there is one in or near it, tho' it consists but of a few Persons. I have likewise, sir, sent you some *Blank Warrants*, for particular Offences, which those that give *Informations* are to keep by them, and to

fill them up when they have any Informations to give against any prophane and vicious Persons, with the Offenders Names, Offences, Places of Abode, &c. and to carry them thus filled up to the Magistrates; and being signed by them after their Informations are taken upon Oath, to send or carry them to the best disposed Constables to be executed, for the ease of Magistrates and their Clerks, who when they happen, for Reasons that may be gueſt at, to be no hearty Friends to these Proceedings, will have the less Temptations to be backward in acting therein, when they have not the trouble of so much as writing, filling up, or sending out of a Warrant. You have moreover sent you some *Lists* of the Names of a vast Number of *Lewd and Disorderly Persons*, besides *Common Swearers, Drunkards, &c.* who by the Diligence chiefly of only one Society of Persons, who apply themselves principally to the Suppressing of *Lewd and Infamous Houses*, have been brought to Punishment in or near the City of *London*. By which you may be more sensible, what a horrid Nursery of *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, what a sink of *Uncleanness* this City would have been, and what ground we have to believe, that *Licentiousness* and *Irreligion* would have more and more prevail'd in this Nation, had it not been for the Endeavours of the Societies; and that you may be more fully convinc'd with what more Advantage Men proceed in Societies, than they can possibly do alone; tho' I am apt to think, that the *Casuits* will not tell you, that Men are not to act singly, especially at such a Juncture as this, for the Suppressing of the publick Dishonour of

the *Name*, the *Day*, and the *Laws* of *God*, when they can't find any to unite with; that they are not to endeavour to do that good that is in their Power to do, because they can't do as much Good as they would. I must add, that you may likewise very much promote this Work by Influencing of Magistrates to do their Duty vigorously herein; by furthering in as many Places as you can the Choice of good Officers in Corporations, who will have a sense of the Obligations that their Oath and Office lay them under, to endeavour to be serviceable in this Matter; and by letting Constables know how great a Power they have for the Suppressing all publick Disorders of this kind: And by endeavouring by your self and Friends, to encline them to exert their Power, in going about into the Streets, Markets, and other Publick Places, on Week Days, for the taking up of *Drunkards*, *Swearers*, &c. and carrying of them before Magistrates; and on the *Lord's-Day*, by inspecting into Publick Houses, for the preventing of *Tippling*; and by taking up of *Drovers*, *Carriers*, &c. that Travel on that Day, and such as carry their Wares or Goods about the Streets to their Customers, or are found at unlawful *Sports* and *Pastimes*, as they are directed in the *Help to Reformation*. One or two Constables that shall thus exercise their Office, will be able very much, if not wholly, to prevent all Disorders of this kind, in most Cities and Corporations of the Nation. I am assured, that in divers Corporations of this Kingdom, as well as in *Ireland*, religious Men have voluntarily taken the Constables Office upon them, for the more effectual carrying on of this Design. Herein
then

then your Endeavours are like to be more serviceable than in any other thing that I can easily instance, unless it be in the promoting of the * giving of Informations against Offenders, or in the raising Societies; by which Societies many proper Measures will be thought of, and this Undertaking be put upon the most lasting Foundation.

* See the Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England and Ireland, &c. p. 58, 59, 60, &c.

And these are the Methods which we find recommended by the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury in his Circular Letter, dated April 4. 1699. in which the Bishops of that Province in their joint Letter concurred. † The remarkable Words of which Letter are these: Every pious Person of the Laity should, if need be, be put in Mind, that he ought to think himself obliged to use his best Endeavours to have such Offenders punished by the Civil Magistrates as cannot be no otherwise amended; and that when he hears to the Bishop his Neighbour Swear, or Blaspheme the Name of God, or sees him offend in Drunkenness, or Prophanation of the Lord's Day, he ought to give the Magistrate Notice of it. In such a Case to be called an Informer, will be so far from making any Man odious, in the Judgment of sober Persons, that it will tend to his Honour, when he makes it appear by his unblameable Behaviour, and the Care that he takes of himself and his Family, that he doth it purely for the Glory of God, and the Good of his Brethren. Such well disposed Persons as are resolved upon this, should be encouraged to meet as often as they can, to consult how they may most discreetly and effectually manage it in the Places where they live.

Here then Ministers are obliged by their Bishops to put the Laity in Mind of giving of In-

† The Archbishop of Canterbury's Circular Letter to the Bishops of his Diocese, p. 4, 6.

Informations to Magistrates against Profane-
ness and Vice, as a *matter of Duty*, and an
honourable thing; and to encourage them to
meet frequently together; and to *consult how* they
may discreetly and effectually manage it in the
places where they live. And in the fourth Page
of this *Letter*, the *Clergy* are directed to invite
the Church-Wardens of their several Parishes,
and other Pious Persons among the Laity, to
join with them in the Execution of the most
probable Methods that can be suggested for
the carrying on a Reformation of Manners;
and we are told, that from such Meetings we
may expect happy Effects. And in the same
Page 'tis observed, that from such Meetings
happy Advances have been already made to-
wards a *Reformation of Manners*, which is ex-
pressed in these Terms; *From the visible Success*
of that Noble Zeal wherewith so many about the
*great * Cities in my Neighbourhood do promote*
true Piety, and a Reformation of Manners.

* London
and West-
minster.

*The Arch-
Bishop of
Canterbu-
ry's Letter
to the Arch
Deacons
and the rest
of the Cler-
gy of the
Diocess of
St. David,
p. 9, 10.*

And in his Grace's Letter to the Arch-Dea-
cons and the rest of the Clergy of the Diocess
of St. David, published the latter end of the
last Summer, 1703. His Grace was pleased
to express himself in these Terms, ' There are
' a great many Religious and worthy Persons
' in many parts of the Kingdom, who do still
' make it their Business to promote the Execu-
' tion of good Laws: And I hope any little In-
' discretion which may happen among some few
' of them, will not be made a handle to dispa-
' rage all such Useful Proceedings. And tho'
' I am sensible that it is not meerly the Fear of
' the Law which must make People true Chri-
' stians, yet however, great Good may be done
' by

by such Means, thro' God's Blessing: And they who at the first are restrained from doing Evil out of Fear of Punishment, may become Virtuous upon more Spiritual Motive: Likewise many Temptations may be removed out of the way, especially of Young People, much open Scandal and Dishonour to God and our Holy Religion may be prevented: And we have also reason to hope, that if the Edge of the Law, and the Authority of the Magistrate, be turned against Impiety and Immorality, God will not look upon our Sins to be National; and so we may prevent those Judgments which otherwise they would bring upon us: For these Reasons, I think, you will do God, and our Church and Nation, good Service, if you will make it your Endeavour to give the World all the Marks of your Respect of those Worthy Magistrates, or other Gentlemen, and also of Inferior Persons, whom you see Zealous in the Cause of God and Religion, and excite others to follow their Example.

Now then, *Sir*, you see the Undertaking I recommend to you to engage in, is called by our great Metropolitan the Cause of God and Religion: And you have moreover the declared Judgment before you of most of our Learned Prelates concerning our giving of Informations, and our associating for the consulting upon the most probable Methods of *Reformation*, and their Judgment with the beforementioned Approbation of Societies (published in the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*) of so many Persons celebrated for Wisdom, and in high Stations in the Church and State, who have herein
not

not only declared their Opinion, *That the Design of putting the Penal-Laws in Execution, for the suppressing of Prophaneness and Debauchery, is for the Honour of Almighty God, and tends to the Advancement of Piety and Virtue, and the publick Good both of Church and State, and cannot fail of being approved by all good Men: But that the Method likewise (as the carrying of it on by Societies) is most proper, and with the Blessing of God attending it, is most likely to prove effectual for the promoting a Reformation of Manners.* These things, I say, will afford you an Argument to stop the Mouths of such Persons as either from unhappy Principles, or their Unwillingness to be reformed themselves, may be endeavouring to raise Objections against the giving of Informations, and the Meetings of pious Persons, to concert the most advisable Methods of suppressing *Prophaneness and Vice*, and the Promoting of *Piety and Virtue*, which we call in other Terms, *Societies for Reformation of Manners.*

But if these things will not silence them, you may then ask them, whether they can in Truth think it does become those that pretend to have a Love for God and their Neighbour, contentedly to hear, without taking any Notice of it, such a Multitude that call themselves Christians using, without Fear or Shame, the most horrid Oaths and Execrations in their ordinary Conversation, even imprecating Damnation on themselves and others, as an Ornament of Speech; to see *Drunkenness* pass among them for good Humour, and *Lewdness* for good Breeding; *Publick Houses* to become Nests for disorderly and profligate Persons, or Stews for the Entertainment of Mens Lusts in all parts of the Nation;

Nation; *Sodomites (who have been but rarely heard of in this Nation till the last Age) to have their appointed places of Meeting for their acting their abominable Villanies, and to encrease their Numbers; and Herds of Lewd Women to be continually soliciting of Men to Lewdness in the open Streets; the Lord's-Day prophaned in the most impudent manner, by Mens following of their Trades or ordinary Callings, even keeping open Markets on it, or spending it in Gaming, Tipling, and Excess; in short, to see their God publickly dishonoured and Blasphemed and his Laws trampled on, their Religion professedly attacked, and multitudes of Souls thus to go in a full Carriere to destruction, and their Country thereby to be in manifest danger of being ruined, when 'tis so much in their Power, in this happy Juncture more especially, to prevent these Enormities, which are attended with such dreadful Consequences, by their joining their Assistance with their Fellow-Christians, in furthering the Execution of the known Laws of the Land against them, which so many Thousand Magistrates and Inferior Officers have Oaths and Trusts upon them to see executed, (how shamefully soever the generality of them have neglected it.

Ask moreover these Persons, whether, on the other side, it is not a most desirable thing, and of mighty Advantage to Religion, that the greatest Temptations to the Sins, to which Men are either accustomed, or have the greatest natural Propensity to, should be taken as much as may be out of their way, and the Avenues to them stopped, that we might converse with our Neighbours, or at least go abroad in the World,

Since the
Trial and
Punishment
of the Sea-
Captain for
a Sin of this
kind three
Persons, by
the dili-
gence of a
Society for
Reformati-
on, were
found guilty
of Sodomy
before the
Lord Chief
Justice
Holt the
last Lent
Affizes at
Maidstone,
and were
accordingly
Executed.
And about
two Months
since one
was brought
to Punish-
ment for a
Sin of this
kind in
London,
and several
others have
been disco-
vered for
with-

lesser Offences of this kind, and have very narrowly escaped remarkable Punishment. without the greatest danger of wounding our Consciences, or of being laugh'd at and scorned for behaving our selves as becomes Christians; to have Men restrained from an idle and vicious Course of Life, and be thereby brought to take up with honest and useful Employments; to have the *Lord's Day* and other publick *Fast Days* observed in a solemn and due manner; to have *Stews* rooted out, and the *Streets* cleansed from lewd and impudent Women, and detestable *Sodomites*, that infect them; to have Men restrained from broaching horrid *Blasphemies*, from *prophane Swearing and Cursing*; to have Men kept from depriving themselves of their *Reason*, and from making themselves *Beasts* by *excessive Drinking*; to have publick Houses kept within their true and reasonable Use and Design; from being Receptacles for Persons to spend their Time and Money in them on Sacred and common Days; to ruine themselves, and Beggar their Families by their *Drunkenness* and *Debauchery*; to have the most abominable Disorders, the execrable Impieties of our most scandalous *Play Houses*, those Nurseries of Vice and Prophaneness (whither our Nobility and Gentry are unhappily sent to learn their Accomplishments in their younger Years, suppressed; to have Religion delivered from the Contempt that prophane and vicious Men have so much brought upon it by their Impunity, and publick Countenance in their open and insolent Violations of it; to have their wicked Combinations broke, and frequent and contagious Examples of Profaness and Vice taken out of publick View, National Sins (that bring National Judgments) suppress'd, Virtue appear
honour

honourable and desirèable, Vice infamous and detestable ; and lastly, Men brought to a Regard to Sacred things, to Consideration, and a serious Enquiry into the Nature of Religion, and in time, with God's Blessing, to the Love of it, and this by the due Execution of the Penal Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, in Conjunction with all the other pious and proper Methods, as of *Instruction*, *Admonition*, *Reproof*, of dispersing of *Books* for the awakening Men to a sense of their Sins, and concern for their Souls, the exciting them to *Family Duty*, and the Promoting the *Education of Poor Children* in the Principles of Religion, &c. that are taken by the Societies for this end. When they have allowed these things to be so highly desirèable and necessary, as that unless they are in some measure effected, or at least some other extraordinary Methods are set on Foot then are at present pursued, there appears no probability that the Tide of Wickedness will be stopped, and Religion flourish among us ; you may then ask them further, whether these things are not what the Societies for Reformation do not only directly pursue, but have so much already promoted ; that how bad soever our State is with respect to these Matters, yet that 'tis undoubtedly far better, generally speaking, than 'twas when these Endeavours begun, when we were under such unhappy Circumstances, (which I forbear to mention) that if this Undertaking had not been set on foot, we were, I conceive, likely to have been one of the most debauched Nations in Principles and Practice, perhaps in the Christian World.

If they will deny these things, which, I conceive, they will not without great immodesty,
you

you may then desire them honestly to give you their Reasons for their contrary Sentiments, rather than secretly to raise Prejudices against this Design; and that they would also at the same time propose, as is, I think, reasonable they should do, other more Christian and Practicable Methods for the retrieving of Virtue and Religion among us, which, as they are professed Christians, they will allow to be necessary to be endeavoured in one way or other. And if they can prove to you, which they can never do, in Contradiction, I conceive, to holy Writ, and the general Consent of Mankind to the contrary, that our joining our Endeavours in a regular way, for the Suppressing of Profaneness and Vice, and the promoting of Religion by the other beforementioned Methods, is not a Christian Undertaking, it will then appear to you more reasonable and honourable for them either secretly to undermine, or publicly to oppose it, after it hath moreover been declared by so many Persons in Authority, to be for the publick good both of Church and State, and the most likely way of promoting a National Reformation, and hath evidently proved so successful for this end. But till this is done, they must give us leave to think, that such Persons as, out of a Love to God and Man, are employed in endeavouring, by legal and proper Methods, the hindering the Destruction of so great a Number of Souls in our own and other Kingdoms, and preventing of National Judgments, are engaged in a blessed Work; from which, 'tis to be hoped, that neither their unaccountable Prejudices and Reproaches, nor the Difficulties and Sufferings which are brought upon them by their Means, from profligate

Persons, in their discharging their Duty therein, will discourage or deter them; and that 'tis exceedingly much for the Honour of this Undertaking, that after so many Thousand Persons have been punished for their wicked Practices, and a far greater Number must in all Reason be supposed to have been restrained, in some Measure at least, from their sinful Indulgencies, within the *Thirteen Years* that this Design hath been pursued, no Man, that I hear of, since the first Opposition to this Enterprize in its Infancy, hath ventured his Reputation so far, as to publish with a Name any Objections against it, to tell us any ill Consequences that it hath produced to either Church or State; to charge any Vices on those that have been employed in the forming and carrying of it on, or Irregularities in their Conduct of this Undertaking, tho' in all this time the Enemies of Reformation have surely had a sufficient Opportunity to consider of these Matters; so that this Design stands at this time so fair in all respects with the World, that even since the publick Approbation of the Societies by many of our Bishops, &c. in the printed Account of them 1698. and of almost all the rest of them in their Pastoral Letters before mentioned, one of that Reverend Body,

the Lord Bishop of Gloucester, in his printed Sermon preach'd to the Societies 1699. tells them, *The Lord Bp. of Gloucester's Sermon to the Societies for Reformation* 'That the Service they are employ'd in is incomparably the most noble and highly Praise worthy that it could be possible for them to be engaged in. And as for Jealousies of ill Consequences of their Societies (he says) he never heard one wise Word said on that June 26. Topick, and perswaded himself he never

D

should

‘ should: And then professes the greatest hope
 ‘ he had that God hath still Mercy in store for
 ‘ us, is from the excellent Spirit with which he
 ‘ hath endued so great a Number of good Chri-
 ‘ stians among us, for the running down of
 ‘ Wickedness, by the most justifiable Means,
 ‘ in their respective Stations; and the Encou-
 ‘ ragement that his Majesty hath given to them.

*The Lord
 Bp. of Ely's
 Sermon to
 the Societies
 for Refor-
 mation
 preach'd
 Dec. 30.
 1700.*

The Lord Bishop of *Ely*, in his Sermon preach'd
 on the same solemn Occasion, not only highly
 commended and encouraged the Zeal of those
 that are engaged in Societies, for the carrying
 on of a Reformation, but declared; ‘ That he
 ‘ never heard that any of the Persons that were
 ‘ concerned in the Work of Reformation, were
 ‘ chargeable with any of the Vices that they
 ‘ were concerned in Suppressing; and that they
 ‘ were Men of Virtue, &c. and fit Persons to
 ‘ be employed in this glorious Undertaking.

*The Lord
 Bp. of Salis-
 bury's Ser-
 mon to the
 Societies for
 Reformati-
 on preach'd
 March 25.
 1700.p.26,
 27, 28.*

The Lord Bishop of *Salisbury*, in his Sermon
 preach'd *March 1700.* hath these Expressions,
 speaking of the Endeavours of the Societies:
 ‘ It gives us some small beginnings of Hope,
 ‘ that in and about this great City, there has
 ‘ been for some Years a Spirit stirring, that
 ‘ looks like a Reviving, as if our dry Bones
 ‘ could live again: Blessed be God for this
 ‘ Door of Hope which he is thus opening; and
 ‘ blessed be they of the Lord who have offered
 ‘ themselves so willingly before him, and be-
 ‘ fore all People; their Names shall be of
 ‘ good Savour in the present, and in the suc-
 ‘ ceeding Generations, who have begun to set
 ‘ forward so noble a Design, to put a stop to
 ‘ so many vicious Practices, and to raise a Spirit
 ‘ of true Piety among us. These are the *Salt*
 ‘ of

of the Earth, the Pillars of it, and the Light
of the World.

The Lord Bishop of Chester, in his Sermon
preach'd to the Societies March 30. 1701. *The Lord*
applied himself in these Terms to the Persons *Bp. of Che-*
concerned in the Reformation of Manners: *sters Sermon*
You who are concerned in Societies, on pur- *to the Soci-*
pose for the promoting this great and noble *eties for*
Design, have, no doubt, met with great Op- *Reformati-*
position, especially when you first entred upon *on preach'd*
it: but by how much the greater that was, *March 30.*
by so much the greater will your Re- *1701.*
ward be. The most difficult part of your
Work is already over, and your Progress for
the future will be daily more easie. You have
the Hearts and Prayers of all good Men with
you; yea, the Almighty Lord and Governour
of the World is on your side. Since it is his
Cause you have undertaken you need not fear,
tho' all the Powers of Earth and Hell should
be mustered up against you. Go on therefore
couragiously in the Work you have so happi-
ly begun, and in which you have hitherto met
with Success beyond your Hopes; many even
of the most remote Parts of the Nation have
already followed you, and the rest, when they
shall come to be better acquainted with it,
may be influenced by your Example, till by
Degrees such a general Reformation may in-
sue, as may make this a happy Nation, and
may render your Names for ever Blessed who
have been the chief Instruments of it.

The Reverend Dr. Kennet, in his Sermon *The Rede-*
preach'd to the Societies last December 1701. *rend Dr.*
says thus: 'Firm Alliances and strong Confe- *Kennet's*
deracy was needful to pull down the Empire *Sermon to*

the Societies
for Reformation
preach'd
Dec. 11.
1701.

of Sin and Wickedness. A Mercy of God
that Men of Honour and Conscience fell into
a happy Understanding, and joined Hearts and
Hands to reduce the exorbitant Power of Sa-
tan. My Brethren, Divine Wisdom did di-
rect you, &c. Your voluntary Societies to sup-
press Vice and Immorality raise not the Jeal-
ousie of your Governours, they are wiser and
better; they only raise the Envy of the Wicked,
and the Fury of Hell. The Devil and their
earthly Fiends do know, that you have now
an Army of Christians to engage their Spiritu-
al Powers, with all Prospect of Success to
your glorious Expedition, &c.

Your Want of greater Success has been ow-
ing to the Obstruction and Opposition from
the Adversaries of God and Goodness, who
have put *Stumbling Blocks*, and even Snares in
your Way ——— The Wonder is, That God
should bless so small a Beginning with so great
an Increase of Prosperity and happy Effects;
and raise the Envy of the Wicked, when I say,
that the Fame of our *English Societies*, to sup-
press Vice and Prophaneness, has spread into
many Lands. The several *Accounts of our So-*
cieties have been Translated into many Lan-
guages: The good Example has been follow-
ed in some Foreign Parts, from whence Let-
ters have been often sent hither from Men of
the highest Character, to extol this publick
Spirit of our Nation, and to pray for the
Almighty's Blessing on it---- Within a few
Years, by the working of this publick Spi-
rit, a Multitude of Sinners have been re-
prov'd, and to Appearance at least have been
reform'd; by a moderate Calculation, no less
than

than Thirty Thousand Persons have been convicted for *prophane Swearing and Cursing*, near the same Number of *Lewd and Disorderly Persons* have been brought to a merciful Punishment, and were thereby reclaim'd from their Vices, or at least restrained from the publick Scandal of them, &c. Above One Hundred Thousand *Books of Religion*, and *Dissuatives from the Vices of the Age*, have been given away. All the Inhabitants of this City can attest this Truth, That of late Years *Lewdness* and *Prophaneness* have been visibly decreas'd, &c.

'Tis, I think, worthy the Care of our Clergy to countenance those Persons of their Parish who have voluntarily engaged to carry on the Work of Righteousness and Judgment, of being Fellow-workers in converting of Sinners, and Saving of Souls.

The Lord Bishop of Oxford, in his Sermon preach'd to the Societies for Reformation of Manners Decemb. 1702. hath these Expressions; Since the Design and Tendency of the Son of God's taking our Nature upon him, and of his whole Transaction in that Nature, was to extirpate Wickedness and Vice, and promote Purity and Holiness among Men, what an unspeakable Comfort and Encouragement must this Doctrine afford to all those that are seriously concerned in that Glorious Attempt of Reforming a loose Age. Suffer then the Word of Exhortation, and of Consolation too, Ye brave and truly Heroick Souls, who have entred into a holy Confederacy, not only against Flesh and Blood, but also, against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkeness of this World, against spiritual Wickedness in high

*The Lord
Bp. of Ox-
ford's Ser-
mon to the
Societies for
Reformati-
on preached
Dec. 30.*

‘ *places.* Your Adversaries are numerous and
 ‘ powerful, *the Prince of the Power of the Air,*
 ‘ with his Rulers and Companies, and *the Chil-*
 ‘ *dren of Disobedience upon Earth, in whom he*
 ‘ *worketh,* all evil Spirits, and all wicked Men;
 ‘ and from these ye must expect the most vi-
 ‘ gorous and obstinate Opposition: *But be not*
 ‘ *afraid of their Terrors,* remember that the Bat-
 ‘ tle is not yours, but God’s; that the Cause in
 ‘ which you are engag’d is his, to whose abso-
 ‘ lute Dominion Heaven, and Earth, and Hell,
 ‘ Angels and Men, and Devils must submit, and
 ‘ whom no Counsel or Power can oppose, &c.

‘ If those Generous and Publick Spirits are
 ‘ deservedly Honour’d and admir’d, who are in-
 ‘ strumental in breaking the Power of Earthly
 ‘ Tyrants, and vindicating the just Liberties of
 ‘ Men from their Oppression, how much high-
 ‘ er must their Characters rise, who are Instru-
 ‘ ments in the Hands of God for opposing that
 ‘ universal Tyranny which the Devil, the Prince
 ‘ of the Air, would exercise over the Souls of
 ‘ Men, for breaking the Fetters wherewith he
 ‘ enslaves them, and bringing them into the Ser-
 ‘ vice of God, which is perfect Freedom, &c.

‘ Those Fools that *make a Mock at Sin,* and a
 ‘ Jest of Religion, those despicable Wretches,
 ‘ who *serve the Devil and divers Lusts,* and are
 ‘ Vassals to their own brutish Appetites and
 ‘ Affections, may despise and revile you: But
 ‘ so would they have dealt with the *Son of God,*
 ‘ had they lived when he was upon Earth,
 ‘ and so did the Wicked of that Age treat him,
 ‘ and for the same Reason; and surely, *when you*
 ‘ *consider him that endured such Contradictions of*
 ‘ *Sinners against himself,* you will not for any

‘ Re-

‘ Reproaches you shall suffer from such, for his
 ‘ Sake and Service, *grow weary and faint in*
 ‘ *your Minds*: You will go on with Alacrity
 ‘ when you are assur’d of the Countenance and
 ‘ Encouragement of your Governours; when
 ‘ your most Gracious Queen, in the very Begin-
 ‘ ning of her Reign, has publickly own’d the
 ‘ Cause you are engaged in; and when you
 ‘ may with the greatest Confidence depend up-
 ‘ on the Value and Esteem, the Love and good
 ‘ Wishes, the fervent Prayers and best Assistance
 ‘ of all wise and good Men. You will persevere
 ‘ to the End in this God-like Employment, when it
 ‘ affords you the glorious Prospect of being found,
 ‘ when your Lord shall call you hence, doing that
 ‘ which he himself was doing, when he was here.
 ‘ With what Extracies of Joy will one so found
 ‘ be transported at the Approach of Death?

The Reverend Dr. Stanhope, in his Sermon *The Re-
 preached to the Societies, December 28. 1702.* *rend Dr.*
 saysthus: ‘ The End you propose to your selves Stanhope,
 ‘ by these Societies, is without Dispute com- *Dean of*
 ‘ mendable and good; Approved by all whose *Canterbu-*
 ‘ Approbation is of Value; Countenanc’d in *ry, his*
 ‘ particular manner by that pious Queen of *Sermon to*
 ‘ ever precious Memory, &c. Enforced fre- *the Societies*
 ‘ quently by his late Majesty, and now afresh *for Refor-*
 ‘ by her present Majesty. But still, though *mation*
 ‘ back’d and supported with all these Advan- *preached*
 ‘ tages, Reformation of Manners, almost above *Dec. 28.*
 ‘ any other Undertaking, is certain to encounter *1702.*
 ‘ with a World of Difficulties and Prejudices.
 ‘ I dare presume, upon leave in your Names, to
 ‘ declare, that you know not how to wish any
 ‘ thing more for the general Reputation and
 ‘ Advantage of the Work you have undertaken,

‘ than that all Persons, fit to be satisfied with the
 ‘ Methods as well as Design, would strictly en-
 ‘ quire into your Orders, the Caution, the
 ‘ Prudence, and the Endeavours that no Irregu-
 ‘ larity shall blemish the Management of them.

‘ It is so far from being a Comfort or an
 ‘ Abatement, as to be indeed the highest Ag-
 ‘ gravation of our Folly and our Sorrows, to en-
 ‘ joy the best Laws, and the happiest Constitu-
 ‘ tion, if we turn the one into a dead Letter,
 ‘ and will not suffer our selves to be Bless’d by
 ‘ the other. But Bless’d by either we can ne-
 ‘ ver be, except effectual Care be taken for the
 ‘ exemplary Punishment of Wickedness, which
 ‘ if Triumphant, and once an Over-match for
 ‘ Authority and Virtue, will soon subvert the
 ‘ very Foundations upon which all Govern-
 ‘ ment stands, and must, in the Course of things,
 ‘ prove our swiftest, our heaviest, and most
 ‘ irreparable Destruction, &c.

‘ Pray let any serious Man consider, Is it our
 ‘ Security, our Honour, to have wholesome
 ‘ Laws? and can it be infamous to endeavour
 ‘ that we shall have them to no Purpose? Is
 ‘ this to be Subjects and Patriots? Is this to be
 ‘ good Men and Christians, to think Civility
 ‘ obliges us to see the most Sacred things in-
 ‘ sulted and trodden under Foot, without vin-
 ‘ dicating or taking any Notice of the Affront?
 ‘ Did Martyrs even dare to die for Religion,
 ‘ when the Laws of the State were against it;
 ‘ and have not we the Courage to speak or shew
 ‘ any Concern for Religion, when the Consti-
 ‘ tution is on our Side, and all for Fear that they
 ‘ who have no Regard to Religion, should hate
 ‘ or revile us for calling them to Account? Can
 ‘ any

any Fidelity oblige us to flatter Men in Wick-
edness, or the Rules of good Breeding super-
cede those of the Bible and our Statute Book?
The Heathen Orator could say, That no
Friendship binds against the Common-Interest.
And is it then a Bar to the higher and antec-
edent Engagements of Oaths and Vows, and
Sacramental Covenants superadded to the Ad-
vantage of the Publick? Let us not, I be-
seech you, continue to delude our selves with
false Notions and empty Names; for such are
Honour, Decency, and Friendship, when set
in Opposition to Virtue, Religion, and the
Common Good: nay, they are worse than
empty Names, they are the Honour of Con-
spirators, the Decency of Parasites, the Friend-
ship of Banditti and Murtherers.

Light and Darknes are not more distant
than are this venomous Brood from you good
Men, whose only Business and Desire it is to
restrain those Exorbitancies, which no good
Man can, or ought, patiently to see rampant,
and out-braving the Laws of God and Man
by their Impunity, &c.

The only Part remaining for me on this
Occasion, is to say, for all the Good ye have
already done the Cause of God and Virtue,
Blessed be ye of the Lord, &c.

The Bishop of *Chichester*, in his Sermon *The Ld. Bp. of*
preached on the same Occasion, *March 30th Chichester's*
1703. thus expressed himself: 'Almighty God *Sermo nto*
expects that his Honour should be righted, *the Societies*
his Justice vindicated amongst Men, by their *for Reforma-*
making such Laws as shall best answer that *tion, preach-*
End, and by supporting those Laws by a due *ed March*
and vigorous Execution, as the Case shall re- *30. 1703.*
quire, &c.

' When

‘ When Matters are come to this Extremity,
 ‘ when the Provocation runs high, that Au-
 ‘ thority is affronted, and the most sacred things
 ‘ prophaned ; that Men make a Mock at Sin,
 ‘ and it walks abroad with a barefaced Impu-
 ‘ dence, Compassion is then a Fault, and next
 ‘ to them that do offend are they to be repu-
 ‘ ted guilty, who have it in their Power, and
 ‘ to whose Station and Place it doth belong,
 ‘ shall yet take no Care to discountenance and
 ‘ Punish that which the Law of God and Men
 ‘ do assign proper Punishments for, &c.

‘ It becomes necessary to make an Example
 ‘ of notorious Offenders, partly for their own
 ‘ Sakes, whom when nothing else will,
 ‘ this may happen to reclaim ; and much more
 ‘ for the Sake of others, that, as the Apostle
 ‘ saith, *others may fear*, who when they shall see
 ‘ the Laws impartially executed, are then likely,
 ‘ if ever, to be reform’d, and prevented from
 ‘ committing the like Crimes, tho’ otherwise
 ‘ tempted or disposed to the Practice of them.

‘ There are private Persons who may observe,
 ‘ reprove, admonish, threaten discover, complain,
 ‘ appeal, and who are to act as the Occasion
 ‘ shall offer ; and indeed without this little Good
 ‘ is to be done ; because those that have Au-
 ‘ thority to punish, have not the Opportunity
 ‘ often of observing, so that, generally speak-
 ‘ ing, as a Reformation depends much upon a
 ‘ due Execution of the Laws, so it is as much
 ‘ depending upon a due Information ; and
 ‘ which is so much the harder to find a Zeal
 ‘ for, because it is in them that undertake it,
 ‘ a voluntary Act, and to which they are by
 ‘ no other Law obliged ordinarily, than that
 ‘ of

‘ of Conscience, and a true Zeal for the Honour of God and the Good of Mankind, &c.

‘ Perhaps there is no Nation in the World that hath so good Laws against Immorality and Vice, in all Instances of it, as ours: And therefore if the Execution correspond with the Law, there cannot but be a due Regularity amongst all Orders of Men. But the Laws of themselves are a dead Letter, and ’tis Accusation and Execution gives Life to them; and if either of these be wanting, that either it is not complain’d of (when notorious, and there is a Necessity for it) or not punished upon the Complaint, the Nation it self is in Danger, and the Government must sink under the Weight of such Remisness, and all the evil Effects which follow such a Neglect, will be justly chargeable upon them, who either as private Christians, or Men in Place, are obliged to stand up in maintaining those Laws in full Authority, which have been made amongst us, &c.

‘ What remains then, but that since we have all by Profession list’d our selves under the Banner of our Lord and Saviour, against Sin, the World, and the Devil, that we in our several Places and Capacities wage War with those Enemies of his Kingdom and our Salvation, that we, as St. Jude saith *ver. 3. Be exhorted that we earnestly contend for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, against all Irreligion, Blasphemy and Prophaneness; against all Wickedness and Immorality, and persevere therein notwithstanding all Discouragements whatsoever; and may this so be done to the End. But when I say *Discouragements,*

ments, I may recal it, When we have not only the Protection, but the Authority and Command of Her present Majesty to enforce it. When we have such visible Success attending this Undertaking. When that which was like *Elijah's* Cloud, as a Man's Hand, has extended it self far and near not only through many, if not most of the Reformed Churches of *Europe*; but hath carried its triumphant Banners even to *America*, and we hope, in Conjunction with that so celebrated a Corporation now established, may end as well in the Conversion of the Barbarous Natives of remote Parts to Christianity, as of Christians to a better and more religious Temper and State of Life, &c.

What Encouragement is this? Or when had the Nation or Church a greater Glory attending it? When a Work so honourable to our Religion hath *England* appearing at the Head of it? So that upon the Prospect of what is in View, and of what is under Consideration amongst us, God seems to have a Reserve of Mercy for this Church and Nation, &c.

The Reverend Dr. Willis, in his Sermon preached to the Societies Decem. 1703. thus expresses himself: 'As our Blessed Saviour was contented to do Good, notwithstanding all the Ingratitude and evil Returns he met with; so he did at last lay down his Life in the same Cause. All this he underwent to do us good; and therefore I hope we shall not grudge a little of our Pains and Charge to carry on those good Designs, for which he did and suffered so much, &c.

I shall take Notice of some of those Ways
 of

‘ or Instances, wherein more especially we ought
‘ to do good to others, and whereby we may best
‘ serve the Design of our present Meeting together.

1 ‘ We ought, as Providence puts it in our
‘ Power, to do what Good we can to the Souls
‘ of Men; and as this is really the greatest
‘ Good we can do them; so there is no Man
‘ but may one Way or other be serviceable in
‘ this Respect, &c. And a great deal of this
‘ might be done without setting up for the Of-
‘ fice of Ministers, would Men, as I have shew-
‘ ed before, do the Duty of good Fathers, and
‘ good Masters, of good Magistrates, and good
‘ Friends, of good Men, and good Neighbours, &c.

2. ‘ It is the Business of him that is a Magi-
‘ strate, or to whom God has given Power, and
‘ Authority, and Reputation in the World, to
‘ make use of those Advantages to restrain the
‘ Wickedness of Men, to prevent Publick Scan-
‘ dal, and to encourage those that do well. ‘Tis
‘ certainly the Duty of such Persons, tho’ they
‘ cannot prevent all Vice, yet however to see
‘ that Wickedness shan’t openly and publickly
‘ brave it; that it shan’t grow impudent and
‘ barefaced, and run down Piety and Religion.
‘ In short, ‘tis the Duty of those in Power and
‘ Authority to stand up for the Cause of God,
‘ who gave them that Power, to be Men of Piety
‘ and Religion themselves, and to do what they
‘ can that other People may be so too, &c.

‘ I shall add only these Two Considerations
‘ on this Head, and then proceed.

1st, ‘ That Wicked Men are, I wont say so
‘ zealous, but so busie and active in promoting
‘ Wickedness in the World (in procuring Com-
‘ panions in Sin, and in making Lewdness and
‘ De-

' Debauchery easie to Mens Consciences ; that
 ' the World will be in great Danger of being
 ' over-run by it, if those that are good wont in
 ' some Proportion endeavour to stop the Tor-
 ' rent ; and take some Pains to reclaim, as
 ' well as others to corrupt and debauch those
 ' about them. And certainly this is one of all
 ' the Causes in the World that Men need not
 ' and should not be bashful in ; for it is to be
 ' ashamed of doing the best Work they can do ;
 ' it is to be ashamed of the Cause of God and
 ' of their Religion ; for 'tis Piety and Virtue,
 ' and the Fear of God, that are our Religion
 ' more than any particular Opinions, and he
 ' that's ashamed or afraid to profess and practise
 ' those himself, or to promote them in others, is
 ' truly ashamed of Christ and his Word ; of
 ' which I shall say nothing but the Words of
 ' our blessed Saviour himself, *Whosoever shall be*
 ' *ashamed of me, and of my Word, in this Adul-*
 ' *terous and sinful Generation, of him shall the*
 ' *Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his*
 ' *Glory before his Father and the Holy Angels.*

' 2dly, The second Consideration I would
 ' propose is this, That many of us heretofore
 ' may have been too instrumental in the De-
 ' vil's Service, and contributed toward the Cor-
 ' ruption of the World, and the Loss of Souls,
 ' by our Influence or Authority, or evil Ex-
 ' ample ; and therefore as God expects we
 ' should make Reparation for Wrong done
 ' according to our Power ; it lies upon us to undo
 ' this as much as we can, especially to endea-
 ' vour to bring over those Persons we may have
 ' been the means of corrupting ; but if that be
 ' now out of our Power, either by Reason of
 ' distance

‘ distance of Place, or diversity of Condition, or
‘ because they are already entered upon their
‘ unchangeable State, or so hardened in Sin that
‘ we cannot do any good upon them; yet how-
‘ ever, still Reparation is to be made to the
‘ World for the Mischief and Disorder that
‘ may have been caused by this means, and es-
‘ pecially to our Saviour Jesus Christ, for the
‘ weakening his Kingdom, and the Loss of
‘ those Souls he died to save, &c.

‘ The last Way I shall mention of doing good
‘ to the Publick is, That tho’ we have no hand
‘ in Publick Offices or Affairs our selves, yet we
‘ should do what we can in our private Ca-
‘ pacity to encourage those who are zealous to
‘ put Laws in Execution for the publick
‘ Good; especially for the Suppressing of Pro-
‘ phaneness and Immorality, as being one of the
‘ best Services they can do both for the Church
‘ and the Kingdom: Our Duty with Respect to
‘ such Persons is, to honour and esteem them;
‘ to give them the Praise that is due to such
‘ worthy Designs; to put the best construction
‘ upon their Actions; and by doing what we
‘ can to make the thing honourable, to encour-
‘ age others to the same Zeal.

‘ It has been a great Discouragement to such
‘ good Designs, that if Men are active to put
‘ Laws in Execution, they must provoke a great
‘ many whose Interest or whose Apperites are
‘ to be controled and restrained, and such as
‘ these will be clamorous and noisie, and they
‘ will always find some to countenance them
‘ who affect the Reputation of being Wise by
‘ doing nothing, and by neither giving them-
‘ selves nor any Body else any Trouble. And
‘ therefore

‘ therefore on the other side, all that wish well
‘ to so good a Work should stand up in their
‘ Defence, and give them their due Praise, and
‘ make this, which is indeed the Cause of God,
‘ Honourable in the World.

‘ It is indeed the Duty of good Christians to
‘ be Zealous in the Service of God, whatever
‘ Treatment they meet with; to go through
‘ *evil Report or good Report* themselves, so they
‘ can but bring Honour to God; and I question
‘ not but there are a great many who would do
‘ it, and chearfully too. But I am sure it is not
‘ for the Honour of God, or the Good of the
‘ World, that they should be put upon this Tri-
‘ al. No; to respect such Persons is what the
‘ good Cause they are engaged in requires from
‘ us, and what we ought in Gratitude to pay
‘ those who are the Instruments of doing Good
‘ to the World, &c.

‘ I would now in the last Place address my
‘ self to those worthy Persons who are more par-
‘ ticularly concerned in the Occasion of our pre-
‘ sent Meeting together, whether Magistrates or
‘ Assistants to those good Designs by their Ad-
‘ vice and Contributions, or lastly those who
‘ by their Pains and Trouble in giving Infor-
‘ mations inable the Magistrates more effectual-
‘ ly to do their Duty, &c.

‘ Your good Designs, and the good Effects
‘ of them, are now so manifest, that I need not
‘ give any particular Account of them, and much
‘ less need to say any thing in their Defence;
‘ what you have already done, and what you
‘ are still doing, does not require an Apology,
‘ but the Praise and Thankfulness of all good
‘ Men, of all those that wish well either to
‘ Religion,

‘ Religion, or their Country; which I hope
‘ you have, and their Prayers too, that God
‘ would increase your Numbers, and strengthen
‘ your Hands; and give a Blessing to your En-
‘ deavours.

‘ I have all along hinted at many Arguments
‘ which may encourage you *not to be weary in*
‘ *well doing*; and therefore shall now only pro-
‘ pose these two things more to your Considera-
‘ tion, and so conclude.

I. ‘ The *first* is this: That though the
‘ Work, in which you are engaged, be in it
‘ self a Work of *Justice*, yet it is also a Work of
‘ the greatest *Charity*. It is great Charity to the
‘ Souls of Men, to their Bodies, to their Fa-
‘ milies, and to all that belong to them; all
‘ which are great Sufferers by Vice and Immo-
‘ rality. It is frequently a great Charity and
‘ Kindness to the Offenders themselves, who
‘ may be amended or at least restrained by the
‘ Correction of the Law: But it is always a
‘ Charity to our Country to prevent Disorders
‘ in it, and to many particular Persons, who may
‘ be kept within Bounds by the Example of the
‘ Punishment of others.

‘ As a prudent Restraint may preserve a Man’s
‘ Innocence, and prevent his Corruption, so it
‘ may bring him to Consideration afterwards,
‘ and by that, be the Beginning of a sincere Con-
‘ version. When a Person finds his Way hedg-
‘ ed up with Briars and Thorns, it may make
‘ him think of returning, and be more ready to
‘ hearken to the Monitions of his Conscience,
‘ and the good Advice of Friends or Ministers,
‘ and we have frequent Instances of the Con-
‘ versions of Men which have had their Begin-

‘ning upon this Bottom; and therefore the re-
 ‘moving Temptations, and the making Vice
 ‘difficult and uneasie by the Execution of the
 ‘Laws against it, is upon all Accounts a great
 ‘Charity.

2. ‘The other Argument I would make use
 ‘of to encourage your Zeal is this: That the
 ‘engaging the Authority of the Law, and the
 ‘Power of the Magistrates against Immorality
 ‘and Prophaneness, is the most likely Method
 ‘to prevent the Judgments of God, which they
 ‘may otherwise bring down upon our Church
 ‘and Nation.

‘National Sins deserve National Judgments;
 ‘and unless God have some other wise Ends of
 ‘his Providence to serve by sparing such a Nati-
 ‘on, will very likely bring them down upon it;
 ‘upon which Account the best Service we can do
 ‘our Country is, to endeavour, by a general Re-
 ‘formation, to appease the Wrath of God:
 ‘But if that cannot be done, however to turn
 ‘the Edge of the Law and the Authority of
 ‘the Nation against Sin and Wickedness, which
 ‘if we do, we have Reason to hope, that though
 ‘the Offenders may be many, yet that God
 ‘will not look upon the Wickedness to be Nati-
 ‘onal, nor punish the whole for it; but let eve-
 ‘ry Man bear his own Burthen, and the Guilt
 ‘follow only the particular Offenders.

‘The last thing I would observe is this:
 ‘That this Zeal of *Phinehas*, which you see had
 ‘such great Effects, was only the Zeal of a sin-
 ‘gle Person; which should be a great Encou-
 ‘ragement to us, to do our Duty, and to be
 ‘Zealous for God and Religion, though we
 ‘have not so many to join with us, as we
 ‘might

‘ might perhaps desire. I am afraid that a great
‘ many are apt to be discourag’d by thinking that
‘ all they can do will signifie very little, as to
‘ the main of Affairs ; that if the World be wick-
‘ ed, it is like to be so still, when they have done
‘ all they can ; and that if God be angry with
‘ us for our Sins, it is not a single Person, or a
‘ few, that can turn away his Wrath : Such
‘ Thoughts as these, I doubt, make too many lie
‘ quite still, and neglect to do what otherwise
‘ they might and would do : but we ought to
‘ remember, that if every one should make this
‘ Excuse for himself, as it is certain one may
‘ make it as well as another, the World would
‘ quickly be a sad Place, and much worse
‘ than it is ; and on the other side, did none dis-
‘ courage themselves by this, it might quickly
‘ be much better. We ought all therefore cheer-
‘ fully to do our Duties in our several Stations,
‘ and leave the Event to God. It is not any one
‘ Soldier in an Army that can, tho’ by the great-
‘ est Valour, do much towards the Success of
‘ a War ; but if every one should under that Pre-
‘ tence excuse himself, they would then altoge-
‘ ther do nothing. We cannot tell how much
‘ Good a Man may do in the World, that does
‘ heartily and seriously set about it ; or how few
‘ People, that do with Zeal and Vigour set
‘ themselves against the Wickedness of the
‘ Times, and heartily interceed with God, may
‘ turn his Wrath away from us. We cannot
‘ but be all sensible what Marks of his Displea-
‘ sure we felt in the late dreadful Storm, and
‘ in what a Critical Posture our Affairs now
‘ stand ; and therefore how much it concerns us

‘ to make our Peace with him, least he quite
‘ give us up.

‘ To conclude all in a Word : We have this
‘ further Encouragement to do our Duty, that
‘ if God should, for the Sake of those that are
‘ good among us, think fit to spare us, yet they
‘ who do by their ill Lives and Negligence
‘ their part to provoke his Wrath, shall have
‘ all the Guilt of it to answer for in another
‘ World : and on the other Side, there is this
‘ Comfort for those who do endeavour to stand
‘ in the Gap, that if notwithstanding all they
‘ can do, yet Iniquity does still so abound, that
‘ God shall think fit to give us up, their Labour
‘ shall not be lost ; God will either save them
‘ from the common Calamity ; or bless them
‘ under it ; or, which will be better than all, by
‘ it bring them to Heaven.

*The Lord
Bishop of
Litchfield
and Covent-
ry's Ser-
mon to the
Societies for
Reformati-
on preached
Jan. 1.
1705.*

The Lord Bishop of *Litchfield and Coventry*,
in his Sermon preach'd to the Societies, says
thus : ‘ I presume the Time might be spent not
‘ unusefully in a farther Enlargement, &c. but
‘ considering the Purpose of our present Meet-
‘ ing, I think my self oblig'd to use 'em rather
‘ as the Occasion than the Subject of what I
‘ intend to say, by applying them to those wor-
‘ thy Soldiers of Christ, who have list'd them-
‘ selves a second time under his Banner, against
‘ the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. We all
‘ did it in Baptism, when we solemnly profes-
‘ sed and engag'd our selves to live in a State of
‘ irreconcilable Enmity with them to our Lives
‘ End ; and we are too easily brought to flatter
‘ our selves that we have discharg'd this Duty,
‘ when we have been faithful to our selves and
‘ our own Spiritual Interest, when we have

‘ dri-

driven the Enemy from our own Doors, and
make good our Defence against his Assaults:
But those Persons certainly take the Duty in its
true and full Latitude, whose Zeal carries them
to seek him out, and to attack him wherever
he is to be found; to rescue the Weak and the
Deluded, the Captive and the Prisoner out of
his Hand. Grounding my self therefore upon
the infallible Doctrine of the Text, that it is not
being a Member of the best Church in the
World, where the Sacraments are rightly admin-
istred, and the Truth taught without Mixture
of Errors; where the Faith is sincere, the Pray-
ers devout, and the whole Oeconomy edifying;
taking it, I say, for granted, that it is not being
Member of such a Church; nay, that it is not
an exact outward Conformity to such a Church
that will avail to Salvation, without Purity,
and Sanctity, and Moral Honesty; I may truly
say, that the Societies for Reformation of Man-
ners, whose difficult Endeavours are all dire-
cted to this only and blessed End, are highly
serviceable to God, and to the Church: And
I shall endeavour to prove it in these following
Particulars; by shewing,

First, That their Labours have a direct
Tendency to make the Preaching and Ministry
of the Clergy successful.

Secondly, That they help the Civil Magistrate
in the Discharge of his Duty. And,

Thirdly, That single Persons would be able
to make little Progress in such a Work, (how
good soever their Intentions might be) unless
they acted by Concert and mutual Agreement;
whereby they might be able to strengthen each

' other in opposing the Hardships they are sure
 ' to encounter with. And,
 ' First, ' That the Labours of the Societies for
 ' Reformation of Manners, have a direct Ten-
 ' dency to make the Preaching and Ministry of
 ' the Clergy successful: *The Priest's Lips* (says
 ' *Malachi*) *should preserve Knowledge, and the Peo-*
 ' *ple should seek the Law at his Mouth*; for he is,
 ' as our Church in her incomparable Office of
 ' Ordination expresses it, a Messenger, Watch-
 ' man, and Steward of the Lord, to reach and to
 ' premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's
 ' Family, to seek for Christ's Sheep that are dis-
 ' persed abroad, and for his Children, who are
 ' in the midst of this naughty World, that they
 ' may be sav'd thro' Christ for ever. Here is
 ' Business of the greatest Moment, and which
 ' requires no mean Abilities in the Performance;
 ' to instruct the Ignorant, admonish the Negli-
 ' gent, reprove the Criminal, and correct the
 ' Obstinate; to struggle against Principalities
 ' and Powers, against Mens corrupt Inclinations
 ' and Passions, against evil Customs and wick-
 ' ed Habits, unreasonable Prepossessions and
 ' groundless Prejudices: And yet an honest and
 ' good Pastor would hope, with the Blessing of
 ' God, to surmount these Difficulties, if he could
 ' but come to grapple with them. But how shall
 ' he preach to him that will not hear? How
 ' shall he reprove the Scornor that shuns him?
 ' Or punish the Reprobate that despises the Cen-
 ' sures of the Church? What will he care to
 ' be cut off from our Communion that has for-
 ' saken it before? If that dreadful Sentence
 ' drew down from Heaven (as in the Infancy of
 ' the Church) some signal Judgment upon the
 ' Head

' Head of him against whom it was denounced,
 ' one would hope such a desperate person might
 ' be awakened and feel, tho' he would not be
 ' brought to hear of his Danger. But in these
 ' latter Ages God has not appear'd thus visibly
 ' in Vindication of that Authority he has given
 ' to the Church; and as ill Subjects slight Hu-
 ' mane Laws that are not enforced with some
 ' Penalty, so Reprobate Christians despise and
 ' laugh at Penalties, which they do not see follow'd
 ' with immediate Execution; and since this is
 ' the Case, what melancholy Reflections may
 ' one suppose a good Parish Priest, especially in
 ' this great City, to have, who watches anxiously
 ' over the Souls of his People, sees 'em on every
 ' side drawn away, caught and entangled in the
 ' Allurements of Sin, and yet finds himself want
 ' Strength and Power to bring them back? Do
 ' not we think such an one would joyfully re-
 ' ceive and thankfully acknowledge the Offers
 ' of Assistance? Would he not think it a Bles-
 ' sing to have some in his Parish, who would
 ' make it their Business to find out the Resorts
 ' of the lewd and profligate, the Intemperate and
 ' Irreligious, to bring them to Shame and Punish-
 ' ment for their Follies, and then bring them to a
 ' better Life by their Examples, their sober Be-
 ' haviour, and constant Attendance upon the Or-
 ' dinances of the Church? How would it re-
 ' joice his Heart to see his Stragglers thus
 ' brought home, who had broke loose from his
 ' Paternal Care, and whom he had deplor'd as
 ' lost and dead? &c.

Secondly, ' These Societies help the Civil Ma-
 ' gistrate in the Discharge of his Duty. He bears
 ' not the Sword in vain: 'tis his Business to be a

‘ *Terror to evil Doers*, as it is to give Protection
‘ and *Encouragement to those that do well*. But
‘ the former Part he can but lamely exercise with-
‘ out the Assistance of those who will be at the
‘ Pains to find out and prosecute Offenders, &c.
‘ ’Tis a common thing for Magistrates to have
‘ their Ears fill’d with Complaints, and every Bo-
‘ dy is ready to call upon ’em to punish this or
‘ that Delinquent ; but when they set about the
‘ Business, and look for Evidence, they frequent-
‘ ly find themselves disappointed, then an un-
‘ reasonable Tenderness takes Place, and the
‘ Complainant repents that he has brought a Per-
‘ son in Danger, of whom he is willing to hope
‘ better Things for the Future : Or he bethinks
‘ himself that the Name of an Informer has an odi-
‘ ous Sound ; and tho’ the Person indeed be very
‘ bad, yet he cannot bear the Reproach of his being
‘ brought to suffer thro’ his Means. And thus
‘ it comes to pass, that the Offenders many times
‘ see the Face of a Judge with Impunity, and
‘ the Judge by frequent Baffles is dishearten’d,
‘ and grows distrustful. It is a wonderful thing
‘ that any Government should suffer the Name
‘ of Informer to carry Infamy along with it, his
‘ Pretence is always the Service of the Publick,
‘ his Report is judged of by the Probability of
‘ the thing, and the Evidence that supports it ;
‘ he becomes obnoxious to the Malice and Re-
‘ verge of the accused and their Friends, and if
‘ he be not upheld by the Authority to which he
‘ resorts, who can look for Informations and
‘ Discoveries for the future ? And yet Coldness
‘ and Distrust usually receives them, and Slight
‘ and Contempt are sure to follow ’em. It will
‘ be said perhaps, that false and worthless Vil-
‘ lains

lains have too often supplied the Office, and therefore the ill Character will stick to all that take it up; but as that is not just, so Reason of State can less approve it. But this cannot be the Case with our pious and good natur'd Informers; they have no Interest or Passion to excite 'em, no Prejudice or Spleen to be gratified; they love the Persons they offend, accuse in Order to reclaim, and bring Men to moderate Punishments, that they may deliver 'em from utter Ruine. And this, in the Consequences of it, will serve the Magistrate a more agreeable way than by presenting Criminals to his Justice; for it will lighten his Cares, and shorten his Labours. The Retreats of Vice being frequently disturb'd, it cannot settle and take Root; the Breath of Inquisitive Authority blasts it, and the Strength of Temptations is ballanc'd by contrary Fears and Apprehensions.

It was an Observation long since, and pass'd without Contradiction, that the last Age was still the worst, the Preacher took it for granted, *Say not thou what is the Cause that the former Days were better than these: for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this:* But however that Question may be determin'd at present, I hope we have sufficient Ground to believe, that the next Age will be better than this. Those sincere, and upright, and hearty Endeavours which in this great City, and many others of this Kingdom, are carry'd on for the Reformation of Manners, and which by our Example are promoted and begun in many parts of Europe, will in time, with God's Blessing, give a new Face to the Moral World; but especially that most charitable Provision that is made for
the

‘ the Education of poor destitute Children of both
‘ Sexes, in the Principles of Religion and Moral
‘ Honesty, and in such Arts and Employ-
‘ ments as may make them useful Members of
‘ the Common-wealth, will have such excellent
‘ and visible Effects in the next Age, that the
‘ Children now unborn will rise up and bless the
‘ Contrivers and Promoters of so noble a Work,
‘ so extensively beneficial to the whole Race of
‘ Mankind.

‘ *Third Particular*, That single Persons would
‘ be able to make but little Progress in this
‘ Work of Reformation, how good soever their
‘ Intentions might be, unless they acted by Con-
‘ cert and mutual Agreement; whereby they
‘ might be able to strengthen each other in op-
‘ posing the Difficulties they are sure to encoun-
‘ ter with. It is not our present Business to en-
‘ quire from what Causes, or by what Steps, the
‘ mighty Tide of Vice, Irreligion and Atheism
‘ arose, which has appeared so visible in our
‘ Days; but it occasioned more Melancholy Re-
‘ flections to the wise and sober part of the Na-
‘ tion, than all the Dangers that did or could
‘ threaten us from abroad; they saw the fatal
‘ Tendency it had to the Destruction of our Re-
‘ ligion and Civil Liberties, and almost despair’d
‘ of being able to stop a Torrent that rose so
‘ high, and flow’d in so fast upon them. The
‘ late King and Queen, of Blessed Memory,
‘ took Notice of it in their Proclamations, and
‘ call’d for the Aid of their Subjects, of all De-
‘ grees and Conditions, to assist them in the En-
‘ terprising this difficult Work. Our present
‘ Glorious Queen has done the same, and un-
‘ der their auspicious Protection and Influence,
‘ many

many good and virtuous Persons have formed themselves into Societies for that Purpose ; and God, who stirr'd up their Hearts to the Work, has bless'd and caus'd it to prosper in their Hands. It may modestly be said, they have not only put a Stop to the Enemy, checked the Growth and Increase of Lewdness and Profaneness, but gained Ground ; and it may, with great Probability of Truth be affirmed, that all their good Inclinations and Endeavours would be ineffectual, if they were not carried on by a joint and united Force, &c.

Vice, in its first Beginning, creeps low, and is timorous, steals abroad in Disguise, seeks for Privacy and Retirement, and dwindles and shrinks before Superiour Virtue ; but when it grows to a Head 'tis daring and impudent, scorns Advice, and hates Reproof, and where it is not subdu'd, never fails to insult ; nay, it comes at last to endeavour to put Virtue out of Countenance, to lessen its Character, and out-face its Authority ; and when it is thus in its high Career, it must be a very vigorous Opposition that will not be over-born by it. If the Young appear against it, they are told, their Passions and Inclinations call them to that Side ; and if they will not be prevail'd upon to go over, they are laugh'd at as Fools that want Sense and Spirit. If the Old concern themselves, 'tis because they are superannuated ; the Grave are call'd Hypocrites, and the Religious Madmen. In short, where Sin and Wickedness abound, Reason and Advice, let them come from whom they will, are not likely to find Place ; the Magistrate indeed is still able to make himself be felt, but who shall accuse and charge

‘ charge the Criminal? This, as I said before;
‘ is not to be done by particular Persons, who wil
‘ certainly be tir’d out with the Discouragements
‘ and Disappointments they will meet with,
‘ how warm soever their Zeal may be: For
‘ the Wicked are in a profest Confederacy;
‘ when any one of the guilty Tribe is struck at,
‘ the whole is alarm’d; they fear nothing under
‘ Heaven, (they would have us believe, nor a-
‘ bove it neither) but the Hand of Authority;
‘ and therefore he that shall endeavour to bring
‘ them under it, may be assur’d to be charg’d by
‘ their whole Pesse, with Scorns and Reproaches,
‘ Slanders and Invectives, Threatnings and ill
‘ Usage; every thing that may work upon his
‘ Fear, his Shame, or his Interest, and deter him
‘ and others from the like Attempts for the fu-
‘ ture. But when good and upright Men enter
‘ into Combinations for the common Cause of
‘ Religion, and the Principles of Morality, they
‘ make themselves a Match for the Enemy,
‘ whose Devillish Artillery will then have little
‘ or no Effect; for People will perceive them-
‘ selves not to be hurt by it, when they have
‘ a Party and Friends to go to; they will find
‘ it does not lessen them in their Esteem; nay,
‘ they will find it cements and renders their
‘ Union more entire, sows the Seeds of Love
‘ and Friendship amongst ’em, brings them to
‘ make that of every individual Brother a com-
‘ mon Cause, and animates them to fresh and
‘ more considerable Encounters. Again, when
‘ the Friends to Virtue draw together under her
‘ Banners, put themselves in a Posture of De-
‘ fence, consult and deliberate what is to be
‘ done for her Service, where the Enemy is
‘ weakest,

weakest, and may best be attack'd, and where they themselves lie openest to his Assaults, there is an Appearance and Discovery of Strength and Force on her Side, that was not seen or believed before; for there is this mighty Difference between the two Parties, that the one is Noisie, Presumptuous and Conceited, full of vain Boasts and insolent Pretensions, and always endeavouring, by an outward Shew, to conceal its want of inward Strength; whereas the other is calm and silent, steady and uniform, and unaffected; and 'tis impossible to compute its true Force till you see it in the Field. Then it appears, Blessed be God, that the Tents of Wickedness were neither so numerous nor so formidable as it was apprehended; and how much soever they may pretend to have encreas'd and extended themselves, there remains a sufficient Power to reduce them. Let those therefore, that have drawn themselves forth to this Service, go on, in God's Name, go on and prosper, the Lord is on your side, you are certain to have him for your Help and Defence; and, which does not always happen, you have Man's Approbation, Reason and Judgment, even where they are not in Conjunction with Grace, give in their Suffrage to you; they know that Liberty and Property cannot long subsist under a general Licentiousness and Disorder; and what Follies soever Men may have of their own, or how much soever they may be inclin'd to indulge 'em, yet they know their pernicious Consequences so well, that whilst they have any Remnants of Sense and Understanding, they will never be content to
give

‘give them a general License. Nothing is more
‘observable, than that Parents who have lived in
‘greatest Liberty, keep their Children under the
‘strictest Restraint; which implies a tacit Con-
‘demnation of themselves, and that ’tis better
‘for the Children not to follow their Courses.
‘And we may draw from it this certain Conclu-
‘sion; That, excepting only the profligate and
‘the abandon’d, every Body would have
‘Reformation take Place in every Breast besides
‘his own. Go on therefore, and compleat this
‘most beneficial Service to Mankind; you have
‘already conquer’d the greatest Hardships, and
‘the Way will be every Day more plain before
‘you. The Beginnings of an Attempt are al-
‘ways the most difficult; then People are raw
‘and unexperienc’d in their Business, and are of-
‘ten foiled for want of Dexterity; then the
‘strongest Efforts are made on the other side, and
‘the Out-guards and Avenues are strengthened
‘against them: but when once the Lines are
‘broken, the Enemy falls into Confusion, and
‘the rest is a cheap and easie Conquest. But re-
‘member, my Brethren, that you are fighting
‘the Lord’s Battles, and must therefore above
‘all things be careful to use no other Weapons
‘but such as he has put into your Hands; no
‘private Ends must mix themselves in this Affair,
‘nor may any means be used but such as the
‘Word of God approves: All must be carried
‘on with the Spirit of Meekness and Prudence,
‘and to that only End of reducing Men from the
‘Error of their Ways to the Service of God, and
‘the Use of their Country. And if you thus
‘justify your Commission, and approve your-
‘selves to be the Children of God, you need not
‘fear

‘fear to encounter his Enemies: For to apply
 ‘what *Haman’s* Friends foretold him, *If ye be of*
 ‘*the Seed of the Faithful, before whom they have*
 ‘*begun to fall, they shall not prevail, they shall*
 ‘*certainly fall before you.*

Lastly, The Lord Bishop of *Lincoln*, in his Ser-
 mon preached to the Societies for Reformation
 of Manners, thus expresses himself: ‘Those
 ‘who shall attempt to do any great Good in the
 ‘World, and make it their business to correct the
 ‘Errors, or to reform the Vices of it, must ex-
 ‘pect to meet with much Opposition, and to be
 ‘expos’d oftentimes to the Rage and Malice of
 ‘Ignorant and wicked Men.

*The Lord
 Bp. of Lin-
 coln’s Ser-
 mon to the
 Societies for
 Reformati-
 on preached
 Dec. 1705.*

‘This is indeed a very melancholy Remark ;
 ‘but withal ’tis a Remark, the Truth of which
 ‘the Experience of all Ages confirms to Us. Ne-
 ‘ver was there a time in which such Persons were
 ‘generally so well receiv’d as they ought to have
 ‘been : Nor, whilst Sin and Ignorance prevail
 ‘among Men, will there ever be a time in which
 ‘they must expect so to be.

‘It would engage me in too large a Subject
 ‘of Discourse, to look back into the Histories
 ‘not only of the *Old and New Testament*, but of
 ‘*Prophane Writers* : and from thence particular-
 ‘ly shew you what a perverse Entertainment the
 ‘*Holy Prophets* and *Apostles*, nay, and even the
 ‘*Philosophers* themselves have met with, in their
 ‘several Ages and Countries. And for the Rea-
 ‘sons of it, they may, I conceive, be reduced
 ‘to these Two.

1. ‘The Nature of the *Work* it self. And,
2. ‘The *Circumstances* of *Those* who are to be
 wrought upon by it.

1. ‘As

1. 'As for what concerns the *Nature* of the
 ' *Work* it self; it is not only *Difficult*, but *Un-*
 ' *grateful*. It requires great *Skill* and *Prudence*
 ' in the *Management*; and can hardly ever be so
 ' cautiously and inoffensively carried on; as not to
 ' minister some *Occasion* of *Resentment* to those,
 ' who of all others are the most dangerous to be
 ' *Provoked*.

'If we consider the former part of it, *The Re-*
 ' *formation of Mens Manners*; it is certain, that
 ' as well as they generally love their *Vices*; yet
 ' there are but few, who have the *Confidence* to
 ' stand up in the *Defence* of them. Sin is not
 ' only a *Transgression* of the *Law* of *God*, but
 ' contrary to *Mens* own *Reason*. It is as re-
 ' proachful to *Themselves*, as it can be scanda-
 ' lous to *Others*; and upon all these *Accounts*,
 ' will not admit of any just *Apology*. Whilst
 ' *Conscience* joins *Verdict* with the *Reproof*, and
 ' convinces them that they have deserved that
 ' *Shame*, which therefore they always look upon
 ' the most *Charitable* *Admonitions* to bring with
 ' them.

'Such *Difficulty* is there in the *Nature* of the
 ' *Work* it self; of *Reforming* *Mens Manners*, and
 ' of *Correcting* those *Notions* by which their evil
 ' *Practices* are supported. Nor is there any less to
 ' be expected,

2. 'From the *Condition* of those who are to be
 ' wrought upon by us: Who are commonly the
 ' worst kind of *Men*; and for that Reason the
 ' most difficult to be either persuaded or re-
 ' claimed.

'But this is not yet all: For in the *Prosecuti-*
 ' on of such a *Reformation* we must expect to
 ' meet not only with wicked *Men*, but with a
 ' wick-

‘ wicked World: Must oppose a Torrent, and
‘ stand in the Gap against whole Multitudes who
‘ are ready to break in upon us on every side.

‘ Now this will add still more Difficulty to
‘ such an Undertaking: Whilst by the Genera-
‘ lity of its Prevalence, Sin gathers not only
‘ Strength, but Confidence; and encourages
‘ Men even to justify those Crimes when they
‘ become generally practis’d, which being taken
‘ singly would not have born the least Excuse.

‘ To restrain Men in such Cases, seems to look
‘ like a Design upon their Liberty: And all a
‘ Man commonly gets by the Attempt, is but the
‘ invidious Character of a precise, morose Casu-
‘ ist, who would make the way to Heaven more
‘ narrow than indeed it is; or at least, than they
‘ can endure to think it should be.

‘ It were an easie matter to illustrate this Re-
‘ mark, in a great many Liberties too commonly
‘ taken by some who would be thought none of
‘ the worst among us. But that one notorious
‘ instance of the *English Stage*, is more than e-
‘ nough to confirm the Truth of it. The Pro-
‘ faneness, the Lewdness, the Scurrility of which,
‘ tho’ it be of it self sufficiently evident, and has
‘ of late been fully laid open, beyond all reasona-
‘ ble Contradiction; yet is it still followed not
‘ only by the Looser sort, but by many who, one
‘ would think, should detest such Spectacles:
‘ And by withdrawing themselves altogether from
‘ it, should add to its Scandal, and leave it (as
‘ it deserves) to be a Nest only of unclean Birds,
‘ not fit for any, who either desire a good Con-
‘ science towards God, or value a fair Reputati-
‘ on among Men, to resort unto,

‘ And thus have I shewn, not only that those
 ‘ who will set themselves to the business of Re-
 ‘ forming the World, must expect to meet with
 ‘ great Discouragements in the Prosecution of it;
 ‘ but for what Reasons it is they must do so. That
 ‘ the *Work* it self is of a very ungrateful Nature;
 ‘ such as Men are generally the most averse to:
 ‘ And that the *Persons* on whom it is to be exer-
 ‘ cised, are such as have not only a more than
 ‘ ordinary Hatred for it; but will be sure to set
 ‘ themselves with all their Interest and Industry
 ‘ to oppose it.

‘ But what therefore must be done in such a
 ‘ case? Must Men be left to themselves, and not
 ‘ be at all contradicted in their Sins? Must we
 ‘ suffer Vice, like an overflowing Torrent, to
 ‘ carry all before it, and do nothing to put a stop
 ‘ to its Career?

‘ No certainly! Neither the Glory of God,
 ‘ nor the Concern we ought to have for our com-
 ‘ mon Salvation, will allow of such a Remissness.
 ‘ We must stem the Torrent, tho’ we were sure
 ‘ we should be swallowed up by it: And be the
 ‘ more firm and vigorous in our Endeavours, by
 ‘ how much the more difficult and dangerous the
 ‘ Undertaking may seem to be. This was *Da-
 ‘ vid’s* Resolution heretofore, and should be that
 ‘ of every good Man now; *Psal. 119. 126. It
 ‘ is time to work for the Lord; because they have
 ‘ made void his Law.* Which therefore brings
 ‘ me to the other Point I proposed to speak to.
 ‘ *Viz.*

2. ‘ That all this should be no Discourage-
 ‘ ment to us in our Endeavours, considering not
 ‘ only the *Great Good we shall hereby do to Man-
 ‘ kind at the present; but the glorious Reward*
 ‘ which

‘ which we our selves shall be sure to receive for
‘ it at the last Day.

‘ I shall say but very little to the former of
‘ these *Motives*, the great *Benefit* which our *En-*
‘ *deavours* herein will bring to Others, because it
‘ does not fall directly under the Consideration
‘ of the *Text*, tho’ otherwise ’tis one of the Ar-
‘ guments made use of to this purpose by *St. Paul*,
‘ at the 12th and 15th *Verses* of this *Chapter*, and
‘ such as ought to have a very great Weight
‘ with us. For, indeed, what can more become
‘ any Man, than to render himself a publick Be-
‘ nefactor to those among whom he lives? To
‘ expend himself for the Advantage of others?
‘ And not think any Dangers too great to be run,
‘ any Labours too grievous to be undergone, so
‘ he may but do some eminent Good to the Pub-
‘ lick by them?

‘ This is that Heroick Temper of Mind to
‘ which all Men have ever paid a singular Re-
‘ gard. They have thought no Honours too Illu-
‘ strious, no Acknowledgments too high, for such
‘ Services. They have run their Resentments of
‘ these things even into Superstition and Idolatry;
‘ and worshipped those, who had devoted them-
‘ selves to the publick Welfare of their Country
‘ whilst they lived.

‘ Now that, in the present Case, there is tru-
‘ ly the greatest good done to Mankind by such
‘ Endeavours; and that whether we consider
‘ them as *single Persons*, or with Relation to Pub-
‘ lick Society, (which nothing can more establish
‘ than Piety and Religion) no one who believes
‘ the Principles of *Christianity* can possibly doubt.
‘ And therefore, were we to look no farther than
‘ this one thing; even this alone might suffice

‘ both to excite us to it, and to endue us with
 ‘ Firmness and Constancy in the Prosecution of
 ‘ it.

‘ But there is more than this to encourage us
 ‘ in this Case : For hereby we shall not only do
 ‘ the *greatest Good to others*, but shall also take
 ‘ the *surest Method to promote our own Felicity*.

‘ For indeed, what is there in the Power of a
 ‘ Man to do, whereby more highly to recommend
 ‘ himself to God’s Favour and Acceptance ? This
 ‘ is truly to direct our Actions to the Glory of
 ‘ God, and the Honour of his Religion. And
 ‘ when to this we shall add, that it’s to exercise
 ‘ the highest Charity towards our Neighbour
 ‘ too ; I know not what can be more desired to
 ‘ shew, that it must be also most pleasing to God,
 ‘ and profitable to the Salvation of that Person
 ‘ who diligently employs himself in it.

‘ Hence we may observe what extraordinary
 ‘ Promises God has been pleased to make to such
 ‘ as do this. *They that are wise*, says Daniel ;
 ‘ or rather, *they who make others so ; shall shine*
 ‘ *as the Brightness of the Firmament : and they*
 ‘ *that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for*
 ‘ *ever and ever*, Dan. xii. 3. Brethren, says St.
 ‘ James, Chap. v. 19, 20. *If any of you do err*
 ‘ *from the Truth, and one convert him ; let him*
 ‘ *know, that he which converteth a Sinner from the*
 ‘ *Error of his way, shall save a Soul from Death,*
 ‘ *and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.*

‘ Nor are we to measure either the Certainty
 ‘ or Greatness of our Reward, in this Case, from
 ‘ the Success of our Labours, but from the Di-
 ‘ ligence and Sincerity of our Endeavours.

‘ Nay more : Tho’ our Endeavours should
 ‘ meet not only with a Disappointment, but even
 ‘ with

‘with a Scorn too : This is truly to suffer for
 ‘*Righteousness sake* ; and will intitle us to the
 ‘Promise of our *Apostle* in the *Words* before the
 ‘Text, *That our light Afflictions, which are but*
 ‘*for a Moment, shall work out for us a far more ex-*
 ‘*ceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.*

‘Now this, I say (2dly,) ought to be more
 ‘than enough to encourage us to go on, against
 ‘all Dangers and Discouragements that may
 ‘chance to arise, to stop us in this Work.

‘For what is it, in effect, but this that we live
 ‘for ? What have we to do in this World, but
 ‘to be useful to Mankind, and to lay up a Pro-
 ‘vision for our future Happiness in the next ?
 ‘Let me add yet more ; What is there besides
 ‘this, that is worth our living for ? Let sensual,
 ‘proud, ambitious Sinners, value as they will
 ‘the Pleasures, the Honours and Interests of it ;
 ‘yet when all is done, such is the Vanity that oc-
 ‘curs in all our present Enjoyments, that I can-
 ‘not tell (a few particular Friendships or Rela-
 ‘tions laid aside) what a Man should wish to tar-
 ‘ry one Day in this World for, but to do some
 ‘Good ; or at least, to shew his hearty Desires
 ‘and Inclinations so to do.

‘And if this be truly the only substantial Plea-
 ‘sure, which a Man can take in this present
 ‘State, how much more ought we to be all ani-
 ‘mated herein, when we shall add to this, the
 ‘glorious Prospect of that eternal Reward,
 ‘which we shall by this Means secure to our selves
 ‘in the other World. Where we shall not only
 ‘be set intirely free from all the Troubles and
 ‘Dangers we are here continually expos’d to ;
 ‘but shall be filled with the Fruition of such
 ‘Happiness and Delights, as we are now not a-
 ‘ble to utter or comprehend. F 3 ¶ Who

‘ Who can seriously consider with himself,
 ‘ and firmly believe, that by his present Endeavours he is laying up for himself such a vast
 ‘ Reward, and not resolve to go on and do his
 ‘ Duty, let a wicked World never so much censure or oppress him for it? This is a Reflection
 ‘ that may be more than sufficient to strengthen
 ‘ the most weak, and to animate the most cold,
 ‘ and negligent Christian, into a hearty Zeal for
 ‘ God’s Glory, and his Brother’s Salvation. And
 ‘ so, doubtless, it would do; would Men set it
 ‘ frequently in their View; and bring it home to
 ‘ their Consciences; and not suffer their present
 ‘ Interests or Fears to intercept the Prospect of it.

‘ 3dly, We must resolve nevertheless to go on
 ‘ in our Endeavours, and look for that Reward
 ‘ of our Work from God, which the Obstinacy
 ‘ and Wickedness of Men deny to us.

Matth. xi.
18, 19.

‘ It is no new thing to see the best Men, and
 ‘ the most worthy Undertakings opposed, and
 ‘ traduced by those who are Enemies to both;
 ‘ and that notwithstanding all their Care and Diligence to prevent it. *John the Baptist* went to
 ‘ work in a way of Righteousness and Severity:
 ‘ He came neither eating nor drinking; and the
 ‘ Result was, That they said, *He had a Devil.*
 ‘ Our Saviour Christ came in the common way of
 ‘ other Men: *He eat and drank*, and conversed
 ‘ freely among the People. And of him they said,
 ‘ *Behold a gluttonous Man and a Wine-bibber; a*
 ‘ *Friend of Publicans and Sinners.*

Matth. x.
24, 26.

‘ Thus the Jews decry’d these Holy Persons
 ‘ heretofore; and thus others continue to reproach
 ‘ the best Men now. *The Disciple is not above*
 ‘ *his Master; nor the Servant above his Lord. If*
 ‘ *they have called the Master of the House Belzebub,*
 ‘ *we*

‘we ought not to wonder, if they much more call
 ‘them of his Household so. But Wisdom is justified *Matth. xi,*
 ‘of her Children. This was no hindrance nor 19,
 ‘discouragement to them heretofore, nor should
 ‘it be any to us now. We must go on, as they
 ‘did, against all Opposition, and not give over
 ‘our Endeavours, though not only Scandals and
 ‘Reproaches, but Losses and Persecutions, or
 ‘even Death it self should threaten us in the Pur-
 ‘suit of them.

‘This if we do, *we shall not lose our Reward:*
 ‘If we thus endure to the end, *we shall be saved.*
 ‘Nay, we shall not only be saved, but shall be
 ‘intitled to a greater Degree of Glory in God’s
 ‘Kingdom.

‘And now I shall not need to say, that in
 ‘treating of this Subject in general, I have all
 ‘along had a particular Regard to you who have
 ‘in a more especial manner dedicated your selves
 ‘to this good Work of REFORMING
 ‘the MANNERS, and Correcting of the
 ‘Vices of a wicked and scandalous World.
 ‘Who have formed your selves into SOCI-
 ‘TIES, and fixed upon the wisest Rules and
 ‘Methods to make Christianity indeed effectual
 ‘to the great End of its Institution; the Glory
 ‘of God, and the Sanctification of Mankind:
 ‘And whose Labours God has blessed with a
 ‘plentiful Encrease, to the bettering of the pre-
 ‘sent Age, and to a well-grounded Hope of
 ‘providing for a general Conversion of that
 ‘which is to succeed. Insomuch that your
 ‘Zeal has been influential even to Foreign
 ‘Countries: Who have not only applauded your
 ‘Piety, but have followed your Example; and
 ‘begun in like manner to promote the Interests

‘ of Religion, not in Profession, but in Practice;
 ‘ not in the *outward Form of Godliness*, but in the
 ‘ *inward Power and Spirit* of it.

‘ To offer you any Arguments to perswade
 ‘ you to go on, and abound more and more in
 ‘ the same Zeal which you have for many Years
 ‘ shewn in this useful Undertaking, would be to
 ‘ injure your Piety, as if it needed to be provo-
 ‘ ked. No, I am perswaded you have too well
 ‘ consider’d the present Usefulness, and the fu-
 ‘ ture Reward of what you have been doing, to
 ‘ want any Exhortation, *not to be weary or faint*
 ‘ *in your Minds*. I shall therefore, instead of in-
 ‘ sisting upon any such Arguments, end all with
 ‘ my hearty Vows to Almighty God, for his
 ‘ Blessing upon your Endeavours: That he would
 ‘ so strengthen and confirm you in the Prosecu-
 ‘ tion of them, that no Difficulties or Discou-
 ‘ ragements may ever prevail with you to depart
 ‘ from them, &c.

It may not be an unnecessary Caution that I
 now give you, notwithstanding all these Encou-
 ragements, and all the Advantages I have here
 laid before you for your engaging vigorously in
 this noble Design, not to be easily discouraged
 by the small Number of your Friends, or others,
 that may heartily concur with you in it, upon
 its being recommended to them, at the first espe-
 cially. The Number of zealous and prudent
 Christians are, I doubt, few in comparison with
 the Lukewarm and Prophanes, in most Places;
 Four or Five of these will make a good Begin-
 ning in any Place, though they should be of the
 inferiour Rank; of which sort of Men, I con-
 ceive, *Societies* may be more easily rais’d; not
 only because these are of the far greater Number,
 but

but because Men of Title, and of great Estates,
too seldom apply themselves to Religious Under-
takings, wherein much Trouble or Shame may
be expected: nor are you to be disheartned by
the backwardness of Magistrates, if it should
fare so hard with you, as that you have but one
Magistrate near you that hath a just Sense of his
Duty in this respect, and that will readily receive
Informations; and others, in defiance of all
their Obligations, in Contempt of the repeated
Commands of the Government, and in mani-
fest Contradiction to their * printed Orders of
Sessions, (wherein they formally invite good
Christians to give Informations against the
Breaches of the Laws, and promise to give
them all due Encouragement in it) will do it on-
ly because they can't avoid it, and therefore act
with Discouragement to faithful Officers, and
such other pious Persons as out of a Love to
God and their Neighbour, bring them Informati-
ons, by giving them unnecessary Delays, and
putting them under all manner of Discourage-
ments when they attend upon them on this Occa-
sion: Nor by the Reproaches of bad Men, nay,
of Friends and Relations, when you have the
Laws of God and of the Nation, Her Majesty's,
the late King's, and your late Representatives in
Parliament Declarations, the publick Approbati-
ons of Ministers of State, so many Lords, Bishops,
and Judges of two Kingdoms, and of the No-
bility and Clergy of the Third; the Assistance
of those that are already engaged in this Under-
taking, the Esteem and Prayers of other good
Men, and your own Conscience on your side. If
this is a good Work, such Discouragements as
these are to be expected in so degenerate an Age
as Lon. 1693;

* Orders of
Sessions that
encourage
good Chri-
stians and
good Citi-
zens to give
Informati-
ons against
prophane
and vicious
Persons.

Glost. July
8. 1691.
Middl.
July 9.
Lond.
Heref. Oct.
Buck. Oct.
Bod. 1692.
Midd.
1692.
as Lon. 1693;

Midd. as we are fallen into, since Oppositions, ei-
 1693. ther publick or private, under one Pretence or
 London. other, to good Designs, for the beating down of
 1696. the Devil's Kingdom, have ever been in the
 London. World, and may, I think, ever be expected
 1697. from wicked Men, who are the Devil's Instru-
 Midd. ments, whilst there are any such in it. Nay,
 1698. such Obstructions as I have mentioned, and o-
 London. thers of the same kind, have been, and may still
 1698. be met with from many of those that are not on-
 Gloster. ly not accounted the worst sort of Men, but from
 1698. whom Encouragement and Assistance in these
 Midd. Matters might reasonably be hop'd; though it
 1699. may in truth appear a very shocking thing, and
 London. I am apt to think will be so to the Ages to come,
 1699. that such as are not thought to be the Enemies of
 Lincoln. God and Religion, should with any Countenance
 1700. continue to give open Obstructions to the Exe-
 London. cution of the Laws against Prophaneness and
 1700. Vice, and other charitable and proper Methods
 Salop of furthering the Reformation of Mens Lives,
 1700. and the Saving of their Country from Ruine;
 Surrey and especially that they should do this in a Pro-
 1700. testant Country, where these Methods have been
 Lincoln. approved in so publick and solemn a manner,
 1701. by so many Persons in Authority in Church and
 Westm. State, that few, if any good Designs that have
 Ap. 8. been set on foot in it, or in any other Christian
 1702. Country, have ever been. Oppositions, and e-
 Midd. ven Sufferings, when they encounter us in this
 Apr. 13. glorious Cause, are then, I think, to be born not
 1702. only with Patience, but with Chearfulness, out
 Surrey Ap. of a Love to God and our Neighbour, and in
 14. 1702. hopes of an everlasting Recompence for all our
 Sou- Sufferings in the Cause of our Lord and Master
 thampr. on the other side of the Grave.

To conclude, Sir, You are, I hope, by this *April 14.*
time of Opinion, That there hath not been a 1702.
Matter of greater Consequence proposed to you *Somerſet,*
perhaps in your Life, or a greater Opportunity *April 14.*
offered you of doing more good to the World, 1702.
nor probably ever may be. God grant that you *Lon. April*
may have a right Underſtanding of it, and a 15. 1702.
Will to act accordingly, zealouſly to purſue all *Preſton*
proper Methods of Reformation, ſo as may be *April 16.*
moſt for the Honour of God, the Intereſt of 1702.
Mankind, and your everlaſting Comfort. I may *Mancheſt.*
poſſibly, Sir, in a Month or two, deſire of you *April 23.*
the Trouble, I hope I might more juſtly ſay the 1702.
Pleaſure, of an Account of ſome conſiderable *Suffex Apr.*
Progreſs that you have made in this great Affair, 1702.
directed to ſuch a Place as I may give you no- *Briſtol. Ap.*
tice of in my Letter, when I may ſend you ſuch 1702.
other Directions as may be thought neceſſary; *Cheſter Ap.*
though I preſume, that theſe I have now com- 1702.
municated to you, with thoſe contained in the *Glouceſter*
Books I herewith ſend you, and which your own *Ap. 1702.*
Judgment and Experience may ſupply you with, *Monmouth*
may, generally ſpeaking, be ſufficient not only *May 26.*
for yours and your Friends acting vigorouſly and 1702.
with Advantage in the Places near you, but to *Salop 1703*
enable you and them to ſet this Matter on foot in *&c.*
any Town or larger Village of the Kingdom,
where you have an Acquaintance with, or but the
bare Knowledge of any religious, and tolerably
prudent Perſon, to whom you may know how to
ſend the Books I have mentioned; and ſhall
communicate the Directions I have given you in
this long Letter, for your full Inſtruction in this
pious Work.

S I R,

Yours.

P O S T.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Should, Sir, tell you, that the little Discourses against *Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Drunkenness, Uncleanness, and Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, &c.* and the *Answer to the Scandalous Objections that are made against those pious and useful Persons, as out of a Love to God and their Neighbour give Informations to the Magistrates of these Enormities*, which are sent you, with the other Books, may be given to such as are guilty of any of these Offences, and especially by such as inform against them, and at that time that they are convicted of these Offences by the Magistrates; (with whom, or their Clerks, some Number of them may be lodg'd, to be thus disposed of) for the furthering of their Repentance for their Sin, that they may avoid the everlasting Punishment of it, at a time when they are so apt to be awaken'd to Consideration, and a Sense of their Sin, which are great Steps towards Conversion, by the temporal Punishment and Shame that is inflicted upon them; and that moreover such Offenders may be fully convinc'd, that the Persons that bring them to Punishment, do therein as becomes good Christians, and Members of the Community, for Religious Ends, and with charitable Intentions towards them; and may not therefore add to their Sin and Folly by entertaining any unchristian Resentments for their thus acting: And this is a Method that I find recommended and practis'd by those that are concerned in the *Societies for Reformation*, who have given away, at their own Expence, a great many

many Thousands of them, besides many Thousands of the larger Books which I have sent you relating to this Design, and a vast Number of other Books for the awakening of Men to a Sense of their Sins, and Care of their Souls. I might have likewise added, That this great Work may be very much promoted by yours and your Friends acquainting well inclin'd Persons, that they may be very serviceable in buying up, and giving away any of these Books, as of the *Account of the Societies*, and the *Help to Reformation*, which are now, for the General Benefit of the Publick, sold at a very unusual cheap Rate.

The

*The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the
Grand Jury for the County of Middle-
sex, on Monday the 2d of June
1701. to the Court of the King's-Bench.*

HIS Majesty by his repeated Proclamations having taken Notice, with great Concern, of the open and avowed Practice of *Vice and Prophaneness* in this Kingdom, to the high Displeasure of Almighty God, and great Scandal of Christianity; and that this hath been occasioned in a great Measure by the Neglect of putting in Execution those good Laws which have been made for the Suppressing and Punishing thereof.

And his Majesty having strictly charged and commanded all his Subjects, in their several Places and Stations, to be very vigilant and strict in the Discovery and effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons who shall be guilty of *Blasphemy, Profane Swearing and Cursing, excessive Drinking, Lewdness, Prophanation of the Lord's Day*, or other Dissolute, Immoral or Disorderly Practices, as they will answer it to Almighty God, and upon Pain of his highest Displeasure.

And we the Grand Inquest of this County, having received an excellent Charge from this Honourable Court, enjoining our enquiry into the Matters aforesaid, We think our selves obliged to take Notice of the great Advantages which this County has received from the Zeal and Diligence of good Magistrates putting the Laws in Execution against *Prophaneness and Debauchery*,

bauchery, and likewise of those worthy Gentlemen and Divines, who in this County meet in *Societies*, for the effectual assisting them therein, and who have been encouraged thereunto by the publick Approbation of many of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Honourable Judges.

Yet notwithstanding, through the Negligence of Constables, Headberoughs, and other inferior Officers, the Execution of the said Laws is very much obstructed, to the great Encouragement of Offenders, and Prejudice of the Publick.

We do therefore present such of the Constables and Headboroughs as we have found Negligent in the Execution of their Offices.

The Presentment of the Grand Jury for the City of London, at Justice-Hall in the Old-Bailey, the 4th Day of June 1701. And Ordered by the Court to be Printed.

THIS Honourable Court having taken Notice, in the admirable Charge given to us, of the great Advantages which this City has received from the Zeal and Industry of those Gentlemen and Citizens who, in and about this City, are concern'd in *Societies*, for the Promoting more effectually the Execution of the Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, in pursuance to His Majesty's Proclamations, and who have received

ceived the publick Approbation of many Persons in high Stations in Church and State.

We the Grand Jury of this City, do think it becomes us to return our hearty Thanks to thole worthy Persons who are thus engaged in *Societies*, for the Promoting a *Reformation of Manners*, so absolutely necessary to our Welfare ; and we hope their engaging so heartily in this Noble Design, will be an Encouragement to others to join with them, for the effecting a more general Reformation.

*The Presentment of the Grand Jury for
the County of Buckingham, at the As-
sises held for the said County 1701.*

BEing encouraged by his Majesty's Proclamation now read to us, as also by your Lordship's most excellent Charge. We the Grand Jury of the County of *Bucks*, do think we can do no less than to take Notice of the several *Societies* erected for the Promoting of a *Reformation of Manners*; and particularly we desire to return our hearty Thanks to those worthy Gentlemen and Clergy who meet Monthly at *Wendover* in the said County, in order to effect the same. And we hope their appearing in so pious a Design, will animate others to come in and join with them. And this we present as the particular Sentiment of us, whose Names are hereunto Subscribed.

*The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the
Grand-Inquest for the Assizes held at
Northampton, for the said County,
the 3d day of March 1701.*

WHEN we reflect on the many Blessings we enjoy under his Majesty's auspicious Reign and pious Care, manifested by repeated Proclamations to preserve us from *Vice* and *Immoralities*, (Enemies that have a very fatal Influence on a Nation and Kingdom) we cannot but think it a suitable Expression of our Gratitude and Duty at this time, to declare our Readiness and Resolution, in our respective Stations, to comply with his Majesty's Commands, by endeavouring, that not only such as are guilty of *Prophane Swearing* and *Cursing*, *Excessive Drinking*, *Lewdness*, and other dissolute Practices, may be brought to deserved Punishment ; but also that the Negligences of Constables, Headboroughs, and other inferior Officers, and such as keep disorderly publick Houses, wherein the *Lord's-Day* is so frequently prophaned by unnecessary Resorts thereunto, may be punished according to Law.

And we take this Occasion to return our hearty Thanks to those worthy Persons who meet in *Societies*, and have signalized their Zeal by promoting a more general *Reformation of Manners* in this Kingdom ; a Method approved and recommended by the concurrent Suffrages of many noble Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and learned Judges both in this and our Neighbouring Nation.

*The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the
Grand-Inquest for the County of South-
ampton, at the Assizes held at Winton-Castle, the 4th Day of March
1701.*

COMmanded by his Majesty's most excellent Proclamation against *Vice, Immorality* and *Prophaneness*, in Pursuance of your Lordship's Directions, excited by the pious Zeal of many worthy Persons engaged in *Societies* for the promoting the Glorious Design thereof, encouraged by that visible Success their joint Endeavours have, thro God's Blessing, had in many Parts of this Kingdom, towards effecting a *Reformation of Manners*. We take this Opportunity to express our Satisfaction thereat, and to profess our Readiness to contribute our Assistance for the Advancement of so good a Work, and crave leave to lay before your Lordship and this honourable Bench, that we conceive the great Obstruction and Impediments hereunto do proceed, not only from the Negligence of Constables and other Officers in their respective Places, but also from the multitude of disorderly Ale-Houses; wherein not only excessive Drinking, and other vicious Practices are promoted, but also an Opportunity given to dissolute and profligate Fellows resorting thereunto, to entice and allure young Persons into wicked Confederacies, and *Prophanation of the Lord's Day*.

We therefore humbly hope, that all Magistrates, in their respective Stations, will use their utmost Endeavours to discourage and punish such evil Practices.

The

*The Presentment of the Grand Jury of the
County of Nottingham, at the Assizes
held for the said County, the 14th day
of March 1701.*

THE Honourable Court having in their Charge to us, pressed the Obligation we lie under, to make diligent Enquiry into the Breach of those excellent Laws made for the Suppressing of *Immorality* and *Prophaneness*, do think it becomes us, for the Encouragement of all such Persons who have voluntarily formed themselves into *Societies*, and by their joint Endeavours have made themselves more capable to be instrumental for the *Reformation of Manners*, to take Notice of their pious Zeal, and also of the visible Success that hath, through the Blessing of God, accompanied their Endeavours for obtaining the aforesaid End in many Parts of this Kingdom.

We crave Leave to lay before your Lordship and this Honourable Bench, that we conceive a great Obstruction and Impediment to this most excellent Design, proceeds not only from the Neglect of Constables and other Officers in their respective Places, but also from the great Numbers of disorderly Ale-Houses in this Town, to which many idle and dissolute Persons do frequently resort, and allure others into the like vile Practices and Debaucheries with themselves, which publick Grievance, there have been some Endeavours to redress, that have not yet met with the desired Success.

We therefore humbly beg and hope, That all Magistrates and others, would contribute their utmost Endeavours for the Redress of those publick Grievances, and for the Encouragement of the aforesaid *Societies*, which will animate others that fear the Lord, are faithful Subjects to Her Majesty Queen *Anne*, (whom God preserve) and true Lovers of their Country, to join with them.

The Presentment of the Grand Jury for the County of Monmouth, at the General Assizes held at Monmouth the 26th day of March 1702.

HIS late Majesty's Proclamation against *Immorality* and *Vice*, back'd by the excellent Charge we received from your Lordship at this present Juncture, hath obliged us seriously to weigh the several Inconveniencies that follow our too tender putting in Practice those wholesome Laws enjoined by our former Legislators, as well against *Profaners* of the *Sabbath*, as other egregious Criminals.

The being robb'd of so good and glorious a Prince we have lately been bereav'd of, cannot but be reckon'd among our greatest Calamities: but we dare not tax Heaven with severity for the same, when we consider that our Provocations have justly disarm'd us of so good a Guard. We ~~must~~ acknowledge that our Sufferings are of our

OWN

own creating, and our Punishments proceed from a general Guilt of our own. We shall not therefore pretend to extenuate our Failings, by recriminating upon Inferior Officers; but do hereby promise, That nothing on our Parts shall be wanting for the future, (either as Christians or Magistrates) to assist those that are already entered into *Societies* for stopping that Inundation of *Vice* we see ready to overflow us, or to encourage others in so worthy an Undertaking: Hoping thereby as well to ingratiate our selves to that Omnipotent provoked Power, as to enervate that Prince, who grows upon our Weaknesses, and establisheth his Empire upon the Ruin of our Religion, and Contempt of our Laws.

*The Presentment of the Grand-Jury for
the County of Darby, at the Assizes
held for the said County April 14th
1702.*

Commanded by her Majesty's most excellent Proclamation against *Vice, Immorality* and *Prophaneness*, excited by the pious Zeal of many worthy Persons engaged in *Societies* for promoting the Glorious Design thereof, encouraged by the great Success their joint Endeavours have had (by the Blessing of Almighty God) in many parts of this Kingdom, towards effecting a *Reformation of Manners*. We take this Opportunity (encouraged thereunto by the Charge this Day

Day given to us) to express our great Satisfaction therein, to profess our Readiness to contribute our utmost Assistance for the Advancement of so good a Work, and to crave leave to lay before you, Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace;

That we humbly conceive, the great Obstructions and Impediments thereunto, do proceed not only from the Negligence of Constables and other inferior Officers in their respective Places, but also from the Multitude of unnecessary Ale-Houses both in Market-Towns and the smaller Villages; wherein not only excessive Drinking and other vicious Practices are promoted, but also an Opportunity given to dissolute and profligate Fellows resorting thereunto, to entice and allure young Persons into *wicked Confederacies*.

We cannot doubt but that, whensoever any Persons shall have Occasion to resort to you with any Informations against Offenders, in order to their Conviction and Punishment, they will have all due Encouragement and Dispatch.

And we do humbly conceive, that *Prophaneness* and *Immorality* would not so shamefully abound, as now they do among us, if an Order of Sessions was directed to all Constables, and other inferior Officers, strictly requiring them diligently to do their Duties in discovering and bringing to condign Punishment such Persons as shall dare to offend against those excellent Laws which are provided, and by our pious and Gracious Queen commanded to be put in Execution, for the Suppressing of *Vice*.

And we do humbly pray, That an Order of Sessions may be made and directed accordingly.

F I N I S.
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